

FROM
LONDON TO CALCUTTA,

BY THE
OVERLAND ROUTE.

**NOTES FROM A DIARY KEPT DURING
THE VOYAGE.**

BY
J. H. E. B.,

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[ FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY. ]  
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**PRINTED BY I. C. BOSE & Co., STANHOPE PRESS, 249,
BOW-BAZAR STREET.**

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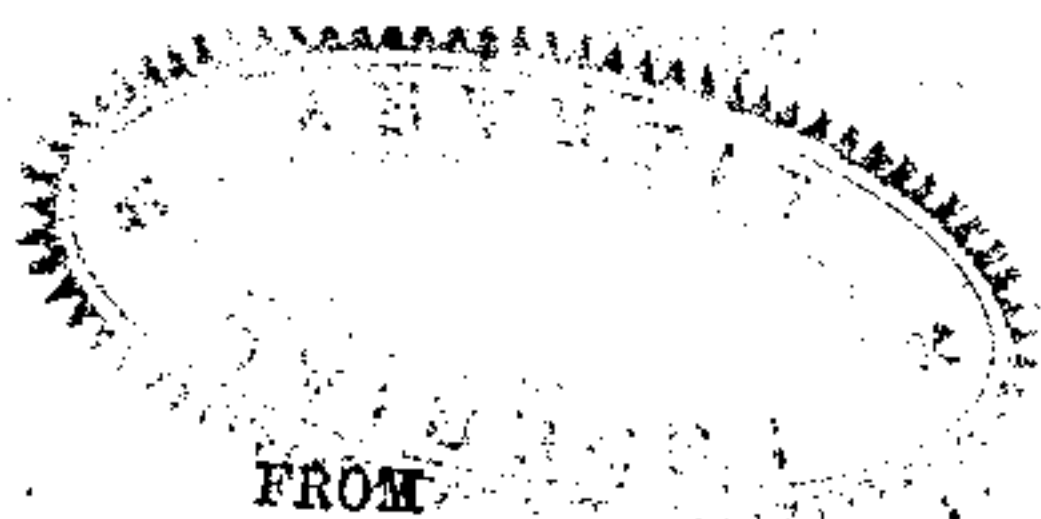
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LONDON TO CALCUTTA.

CHAPTER I.

I LEFT London for Calcutta on the 11th June 1869 at 5 P. M. On getting into the Railway carriage at Waterloo, I found it occupied by three gentlemen, one of whom had brought the whole of his luggage with him, consisting of a large "overland" trunk, a canvass bag, hat box, two bird-cages, one containing two birds, and a bundle. These articles occupied, together with the owner, at least half of the available space in the carriage, and as the train was somewhat crowded, the gentleman was advised to put his luggage into the van appropriated to it. This after some difficulty was done, and shortly afterwards we proceeded on our journey. After the pipes and cigars were in full operation, the passengers became communicative, and the Canaries became the subject of conversation. Mr. D. to whom they belonged, said, he had brought them from the West of Ireland; they were quite young and he purposed taking them to Calcutta, to which city he was proceeding by the "overland route." Upon hearing this

I informed him that I was also bound for that port; we then entered into conversation, and as he appeared to be very agreeable, I consented to his proposal to "chum," as he termed it, all the way out. He was an Irishman, a somewhat peculiar looking individual, being 6 feet 6 inches in height, and excessively thin; he was in Government employ and had been 25 years in Calcutta, during the whole of which time he had suffered from no serious illness. His wife and family had several months previous to this left Calcutta for Liverpool *via* the Cape. Mr. D. left by the "overland route" three months later and reached Liverpool a few days before the arrival of the ship in which his family had sailed. They not knowing Mr. D. contemplated a visit to England for two years, were thunderstruck at finding him awaiting them at the docks. After a stay of six weeks only he was returning to Calcutta, having, he said, found all his old friends and acquaintances either dead or grown out of memory, and the people generally so cold that he was glad to get back again. At the Southampton Station I had some difficulty in getting my luggage, but as my tall friend could look over the heads of the crowd, I sent him to hunt for it, which he did successfully. We put up at an hotel near the docks, and after tea started off to see the best amusement the town afforded. This was of a very poor description, consequently we, after a short stay, returned to the hotel and soon after retired for the night. On the following

morning we went out early to make sundry purchases, and to see our luggage passed and got on board. In this, and in providing myself with many other articles to take on board, I found my gaunt friend most useful, and much of the comfort I experienced during the voyage was due to his kindness, and perhaps I ought to say "cheek." After completing our purchases, we proceeded on board in order to secure our sleeping berths; and as every passenger selected what was to be his bed for the voyage it followed that the first comers would secure the best. I was much struck with the scene when I stepped on the deck of the steamer. The seamen were all hard at work, some stowing away the luggage, others packing away hay and straw for the use of the cow and sheep on board. The butcher in the inevitable blue blouse was feeding the poultry, and the boatswain bawling and shouting at every body in general but no one in particular. At 2-20 the mails from London were brought on board, and ten minutes afterwards the capstan was manned, the fifer struck up "Off she goes," the sailors and under-stewards, all keeping time with the music, ran round and round with the capstan, and the ship's bow gradually left the side of the dock. In about 20 minutes she was brought round to the entrance of the docks, the screw revolved slowly, and we glided steadily out.

We steamed slowly down the "Southampton Water," and as we served the Needles more steam was put on, and we sailed swiftly and silently through the water.

We passed the Needles at the extremity of the Isle of Wight at 3 p. m., and shortly afterwards the pilot left us. Having now got well into the English Channel and clear of the land, we felt the influence of the smart breeze which was blowing. All the sails were set, and under the joint influence of steam and wind we sped through the water in a most delightful manner. As I stood leaning over the ship's side, and gazing on the land which was becoming more and more indistinct, a feeling of sadness came over me as I thought of the long years which might elapse before I could see my native land, my home, and all my friends so dear to me again. A man must be callous indeed, who can leave home, kindred, friends, old ties and associations which have sprung up from boyhood, for an uncertain time, without feeling something of the sadness which distressed me, and as the land faded in the distance until it became as a mere cloud on the horizon, I began to realize that I was about to commence life again, to live in a new world, to form new ties, fresh acquaintances, and to live among a strange people. But still the idea of being in India had its charms, and hope which, in the breast of the young, is and ever should be strong, urged me on and cheered me even in these gloomy moments. Without hope, all would be dark and cheerless, life would be one constant succession of trouble without a single ray to brighten or a smile to help one through his struggle with the world. But this is not what I intended to write when I began.

At 6 P. M., we passed the Bill of Portland, and very soon after lost sight of the land in the deep gloom which appeared to settle upon it. At 10 P. M., I retired to rest, and being very tired, I slept soundly until 6 on the following morning, when I was called by the steward. Coffee was provided for us even at that early hour. The steamer had not up to this time begun to roll or pitch in the least, and I indulged the vain hope that our voyage through the dreaded Bay of Biscay would be as delightful as it had been up to that time; but alas! how soon were my hopes to be "dashed to the ground" or rather to the deck. The horrors of these few days are still fresh and green in my memory, although many fared much worse. But I must first tell you how Sunday was spent on board. At 8-30 we went down to breakfast. The company evidently thought it proper to begin the day with something substantial, and in this case they most certainly acted up to that principle, for the table literally groaned under the quantity of chops, steaks, &c., &c., that were spread upon it. At 10-30 the crew was ordered aft, and their names called over by the first officer; after which they were marched away to do something to the sails. The majority of the passengers then attended Divine service in the Saloon where the prayers and the lessons for the day were read in a most impressive manner by the Captain. After service, tiffin was served, and at 4 P. M. dinner, and tea at 7-30.

At 10 A. M. London time we passed Cape Ushant, and consequently entered the Bay of Biscay. The wind still

continued to blow from the same quarter as on the previous day, but owing to our now steering more to the south, it was not so much in our favour, consequently the sails were taken in and we proceeded under steam only. The sea was as calm as a river, the breeze scarcely causing a ripple on the water. Later in the afternoon the wind, which had been gradually increasing, shifted round and blew directly against us; the sky which had been beautifully clear and bright, became overcast with dark, heavy looking clouds, the sea became more lively, and the steamer began to have a "see-saw" motion, which was most unpleasant. About this time we saw a large shoal of porpoises coming towards us, and we were much amused at their tumbling, rolling and gambolling about the cutwater of the steamer. They are peculiar-looking fellows, being apparently almost round, with a long tapering snout. At 9 P.M. I turned in for the night, the rain having fallen heavily for some time preventing our going on deck. I was unable to sleep for some time, the pitching of the vessel and the dull throbbing of the engines preventing me, but at last after trying all those dodges which are supposed to induce sleep such as counting 1,000, thinking on one subject only, not thinking at all, &c., &c., I dozed-off. A few hours afterwards, I was awakened by the shrill whistle and hoarse bawling of the boatswain as he gave the order, "All hands make sail;" then the rattling of the steam windlass, as the heavy yards and sails were hoisted,

appeared to shake every timber in the ship. In less than 15 minutes all was still again, and the wind now blowing directly aft, the steamer rushed through the water at a tremendous speed, the sea continued to rise, and the "swishing" and thumping of the water against the side made me feel rather nervous. However, this feeling soon passed off.

At 6 on the following morning I went on deck, and the sea was indeed looking beautiful. A strong breeze was blowing; the sun had risen, and as far as the eye could reach in every direction, nothing appeared but the deep blue water, breaking into foam, as the waves leapt over and over each other; the pure white on their crests contrasting beautifully with the deep blue of the ocean. It would be presumption were I to attempt to describe the inexpressible beauty of the sea on that morning, I could have gazed at it for hours without tiring, but unfortunately for me I was that day doomed to suffer that most excruciating of all horrible sensations, seasickness. The steamer had been for some time rising and falling in a very steady manner, but as the breeze freshened and the waves became larger, she not only "pitched" but commenced to roll from side to side. I felt very uncomfortable when I went on deck, and after remaining there for half an hour or so, this sensation increased. A peculiar unsteadiness in my gait might also have been observed, and the little colour I had fled from my cheeks, as if alarmed at what was about to

follow. However I went down to breakfast, but the few who assembled at the table, but too plainly shewed what I might expect. No sympathy ever appears to be shewn by those who, having been to sea before, are not subject to that distressing complaint, and the joking and laughing at the unfortunate individuals who were too ill to make their appearance, and also at my own pale countenance annoyed me excessively. I was resolved, however, to put a bold front on the matter, and I think even asserted that my appetite on that particular occasion was remarkably keen. But "actions speak louder than words," it is said, and alas! in this case how truly did my actions belie my words! All went on well until I had about half finished my repast; the rolling of the vessel however, proved too much for me, the sensation produced when the ship lurched over on my side, was intensely horrible, the chair on which I sat, even the very deck, seemed to fall from beneath my feet. At length, just as I was congratulating myself upon passing through the terrible ordeal of breakfast, the ship gave a tremendous lurch, and I, feeling that the time had arrived, rushed from the table, and amid the laughter and jeers of the more fortunate ones who "suffered not." My elongated friend Mr. D. was exceedingly kind during this interesting part of my voyage, and without him I am sure my sufferings would have been far greater. At his request I made sundry unsuccessful attempts to eat something during the day, but I lay on my bed feeling as sore as if I

had been soundly thrashed, and as sick as if I had been fed on nothing but emetics.

Late in the evening the wind fell away and the sea became calm again, and thinking a little fresh air would benefit me, I went or rather was half carried on deck. Here, lying on the forecastle, were about a dozen others who had been during the day amusing themselves as I had, and very wretched and miserable they looked. The seamen were grouped at the further end of the forecastle, and in order to cheer and enliven the poor invalids they collected all the available "talent" and gave us a vocal and instrumental concert. The Overture was performed by seven men; one performed on a fife, another on a concertina, a third on a tin whistle, a fourth on a Jew's harp, a fifth on a somewhat primitive instrument made with a widetoothed comb, around which was wrapped a piece of paper, a sixth on a tambourine minus the skin, and another on the back of a tin dripping pan. The music of course was not of a very first-class description, but we were all much amused with it. The overture was followed by a song which was very nicely rendered by one of the boys, after which a solo on the fife was performed in really a clever manner. The conductor then informed us that "the next song would be a dance," and kicking off his shoes danced a sailor's hornpipe in capital style. Then a most ungainly looking fellow, with a deep bass voice, slightly cracked, and a most repulsive looking countenance, warbled, "I'll meet thee in

the lane." This was most diverting, for he was about the last person in the world, judging from his appearance, any damsel would like to meet in a lane when the clock struck nine; however we cheered and applauded the man's singing, and were anticipating the next performance, when the boatswain's whistle sent them off to their respective duties.

I slept very soundly that night, the wind having quite died away, and the sea having become almost calm again, there was only a slight rocking of the steamer which was not at all disagreeable. On the following morning I felt much better but still weak and "seedy," but was enabled to take a very little breakfast and to get on deck. At 7-30 on the 14th we were off Cape Finisterre, and shortly afterwards left the stormy Bay of Biscay behind us. The weather had up to this time been chilly, and I found it necessary to wear my warmest clothing; the evenings were particularly cold, and great coats and wrappers were in constant requisition. Among the passengers were three Chinese Ayahs (or nurses) who had come home with English ladies and were now returning to their native country. These people were very peculiar in their habits, and caused much curiosity and amusement on board. One had become a Christian, and on this account could not live in China except in one of the free or British ports, the others had not changed their religion. She was at least fifty years of age, and having made the journey Overland from

China to England, spoke a little of the English language. She, in answer to my queries, said that she had also been twice to New York, but "*not muchee like.*" London was "*too muchee big, too muchee people there, too muchee pushee and squeezee.*" I asked her whether she had been by railway; she replied, "*yes to Toonbrij well,*" (*Tunbridge Wells*), "*went there by the 'chu chu chu'*" imitating the puffing of the locomotive engine. She also told me that when she saw the "*chu chu chu number one time*, she no savee and muchee frightened as Chinaman no havee '*chu chu chu.*'" I often amused myself by talking to the old nurse in broken English, and in listening to her quaint way of expressing herself. She shewed me several letters which had been sent her by ladies with whom she had been engaged, and also the business card of her son, who had renounced his country, his religion, and his "tail," and was now a wine and spirit dealer in "Blackfriar Road." This man had left his home many years ago, and his mother had not, in her subsequent visits to England, been successful in her endeavours to find him, but this time she had been more fortunate. He would not, however, acknowledge her at first, but she persisted, and at last made him write his name in Chinese characters on the back of his business card. He refused to let her stay with him, and sent her away as soon as he could. The two other Chinese Ayahs could not speak a dozen words in English. They dress like the

ton *pyjamas* and a long blue loose jacket. The hair was twisted and pinned up in a most remarkable manner, which is called by the English the "teapot" style, and a most wonderful style it is, having a striking resemblance to the handle half of an ordinary teapot. The privilege of wearing the hair in this extraordinary manner is enjoyed only by the married women.

There were also six Indian Ayahs returning to Madras. These were dressed in the manner adopted by most native women in the Madras Presidency: a single muslin wrapper wound around the body so as to form a petticoat reaching nearly to the ankles, and enveloping the whole figure. They all wore rings on their toes and bangles on their arms, large gold ornaments let into the cartilage of the ears, and a small brooch in each nostril.

There was a large quantity of live stock on board, one milch cow, sheep, geese, ducks, turkeys, fowls. These were all confined in pens erected against the bulwarks on the upper deck. Every morning when the decks were being washed, the ducks and geese were turned out for a walk, and their cackling and quacking, the crowing of the roosters, the loud bleating of the sheep, and an occasional low from the cow, seemed strangely out of place in the middle of the ocean.

We remained in sight of the coast of Spain for many hours, but were too far at sea to see much of it. By means of a telescope small towns or villages were noticed

scattered about it, and several large buildings which were seen along the coast, were, I was informed, convents. The day passed away as usual, the passengers amusing themselves in the best manner they could by playing chess, drafts, cards, reading, singing, and in various other ways; but the hours already began to drag along very slowly, and most of us were glad when night came on and we turned in.

We were now rapidly nearing the Straits of Gibraltar and the number of vessels we passed increased daily; on some days we must have sighted, as the sailors call it, from 4 to 500 vessels of various sizes, many of them being steamers. The reason is this: the Straits of Gibraltar being a very narrow outlet for the Mediterranean, when the wind is adverse, the ships cannot pass through; consequently, they are compelled to beat about or to go into port until the wind changes or moderates. It is not at all an uncommon occurrence for vessels to beat about two or three weeks before they can pass through, simply because the wind is blowing in the wrong direction. At 4-30 on Wednesday we passed the Bay of Trafalgar where Nelson fought and won his never-to-be-forgotten battle. This place underwent a considerable amount of spying and "squizzing" from the owners of opera glasses and telescopes, but we were too far from land to see more than the mere outline of the coast. To-day I wrote a letter home and posted it in the Post Office on board which is in charge

of two people—a Postmaster and a Clerk. The letters are sorted for the different routes during the voyage from Southampton to Alexandria. Shortly after passing the Bay of Trafalgar, we came in sight of the African Coast, and were consequently fairly into the Straits of Gibraltar. The wind had been increasing for several hours, and as the course of the steamer was altered, it blew right in our teeth, and howled through the bare rigging most dismally; the noise increased as the sun went down, and a thick mist almost hid the land on both sides, thus making the navigation very difficult. However, we continued steadily on and soon came in sight of the light-house, when all difficulty was ended. The lights of the steamer were soon after noticed by the officials in the Telegraph office on shore, who were evidently on the look-out, for shortly after passing the light-house several rockets were sent up from shore signifying that the advancing ship was the mail steamer, and a blue light was burnt to indicate that “all was well.” Immediately after a gun was fired from the fort, which was answered by two from the steamer, and I have no doubt, before the anchor was dropped and all made snug for the night, the news of our safe arrival at that port was known in London. We were now under the shelter of the rock of Gibraltar, and the wind was not sufficient to cause the faintest ripple on the surface of the water. The night was so dark that we were unable to see the land which was about two miles distant, the numerous

twinkling lights in the Town and about the Fort being the only indications of the position in which the famous Rock lay. I, in common with the rest of the passengers, turned in early in order to prepare for a visit to the shore in the morning. Whether it was owing to the perfectly smooth water causing no motion of the vessel, or the absence of the hitherto constant "thud" "thud" of the engine, or to the idea of stepping on a foreign shore in the morning, I cannot say, possibly the three combined, but at all events I found far greater difficulty in getting to sleep that night than on any since my coming on board.

CHAPTER II.

On the following morning (Thursday), a great many passengers, I among the number, turned out at 4-30 in order to spend as much time as possible on shore, as it was rumoured that the steamer was to sail at 9 A. M. We found however that some regulations had to be observed before any person could leave the ship. In the first place the Captain and the Postmaster were obliged to go on shore; the former to get a "clean bill of health" and to "clear his ship," and the latter to deliver over to the authorities the letters. In the meantime, scores of Spanish "bum boats" came out laden with all kinds of merchandise, oranges, apricots, figs, grapes, cherries, plums,

tobacco, cigars, and a quantity of non-descript articles. A great many tobacco-dealers came on board with their goods, and a tolerably brisk trade was done by them amongst the passengers and sailors. Good cigars and uncut tobacco could be purchased at a very low figure, the duty on these articles at this port being merely nominal.

The view of Gibraltar from the Bay is grand and imposing in the extreme. The mighty rock, for it is nothing but a solid and a solitary rock, is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile long from north to south. Its northern end, rising in an almost perpendicular manner to a height of 1450 feet from the flat, sandy isthmus which connects it with Spain, is wholly inaccessible, and the east and south sides are so precipitous and rugged as to render any attack upon them, even if they were not fortified, next to impossible, so that it is only on the west side, fronting the Bay, where the rock declines to the sea, and upon which the town of Gibraltar is built, that it can be attacked with the least chance of success. Here, however, the strength of the fortifications and the magnitude of the batteries are such that the fortress seems to be impregnable, even though attacked by an enemy having command of the Bay. It was taken by the English in 1704, but the fortifications then were very inferior to what they now are. Towards the end of the old American war it was attacked by an armament fitted out jointly by France and Spain, but the strength of the place and the bravery of the garrison defeated all the efforts of the combined powers. Since

that time the western face of the rock has been converted, by means of chambers and passages cut through the solid rock, into an enormous masked battery, containing nearly 1,000 heavy guns, and so effectually have these been concealed that not one can be seen from the Bay or even from the town. The town is built in the Spanish style; the streets are narrow, crooked and ill-paved, but the appearance of the gigantic rock with the picturesque little town nestling at its base, the bright blue water in the Bay, over which were scattered innumerable boats with snowy latten sails; formed a picture which was truly enchanting.

After the absence of an hour the Captain and the Post Office Clerk returned, and the passengers were at liberty to go on shore. Having ascertained that the steamer was to weigh anchor at 9 A. M., I, in company with three others, entered one of the numerous boats alongside, and shortly after, for the first time placed foot on a "furrin shore." The landing stage was crowded with Spaniards, many of whom offered themselves as guides. Having procured for a small sum the services of one of these interesting individuals, who spoke English tolerably well, we started off to see the lions of the place. We first visited the fruit market, which we were all anxious to see, every one having an idea that the most delicious fruits are to be obtained in the south of Europe. The market presented a very fine spectacle, but we were just a month too soon to see it in its perfection. As it was, I thought it

contrasted unfavourably with our own celebrated market in Covent Garden. The grapes, a hundred weight or so of which I had made up my mind to consume, were unripe, and the pomegranates, about which I had been dreaming for several nights, were *non est*, so I was fain to content myself with apricots, plums and cherries; the last were not to be compared to English cherries, being very small as to size indifferent as to flavor. The dealers were jabbering, shouting and gesticulating one at another like a lot of maniacs, and the quantity of abuse which they appeared to dispose of, was something enormous. The wasps were immense both in quality and in quantity, and their whisking and buzzing round our ears proved a source of annoyance to us which we were not sorry to leave behind. The market place is built on the outside of the drawbridge leading into the town, and is close to the landing stage, the fish and general market being also near; these we did not visit.

Crossing the drawbridge, on both sides of which were Highlanders on guard, we entered the town. The houses are, with a few exceptions, built in the Spanish style; not that there is a very marked difference between Spanish and English houses, still there is something decidedly un-English about them and about the town generally. Here and there we came upon a house which had an unmistakeable English look about it, but they were very few. The Governor's house is a very handsome building, and immediately opposite to it is the Guard Room, in

front of which a detachment of soldiers clad in white uniform were drilling. Several public buildings were pointed out to us which appeared to have been erected regardless of expense, but our guide could not inform us for what purpose they were built or for what they were used. The shops are mostly small and of a very poor appearance, far inferior to many which may be seen in any second or third rate town in England. The Public Gardens appear to have been laid out with much taste, and great care is evidently taken to keep them in perfect order; they were beautifully clean, and neat and the lovely flowers, which grow in abundance, filled the air with their perfume. A great many soldiers are always kept in the garrison, and several regiments were being drilled in the Public Gardens. A little further on, we came to a portion of these public grounds entirely devoted to the cultivation of flowers. The cactus, prickly pear with their huge fruity leaves, geraniums of all colours grow in the greatest luxuriance, the common scarlet one in particular reaching a height of several feet, and having stalks several inches in circumference. There were thousand of flowers, of the greatest beauty, the names of which I did not know, and our guide was not sufficiently up in floriculture to inform us. Fig-trees abound in the gardens, but as they are common enough in England they excited but little interest. Here, however, they grow unsupported, and are as large as an apple tree. Three or four small cypresses



built in different parts of the garden, into one of which we entered, and obtained a most magnificent view of the town of Gibraltar, the Bay and the bright, blue, glistening water being spread out beneath us like a vast panorama. The building was after the fashion of an English summer house. In the centre of it was a table, upon which was spread a cloth of snowy whiteness, with a lace border; several glass dishes of sweet biscuits, covered with the white saccharine material so extensively employed in the embellishment of wedding cakes, were arranged on it, and a dozen tumblers and a large can of fresh goat's milk stood on the ground. The boy in attendance supplied us for a few pence with a glass of the milk and some biscuits, which, having tasted nothing for the morning, and our walk having whetted our appetites, we thoroughly enjoyed. On our way back to the town we met a company of Highlanders marching out to drill. A solitary piper strutted in front in that remarkable Turkey-cock fashion peculiar to the Scotch performers on this instrument, puffing, blowing, and distending his cheeks in a manner truly awful to see, his eyes flashing and rolling, his arms squeezing the bag of wind, and his fingers rattling away at a frightful pace. I wonder if the bagpipes can be played or rather blown without that peculiar style of walking on the part of the performer! I am rather inclined to think not, for although I have often seen the instrument performed on, both by military pipers and itinerant pipers, in the streets

of London, (usually accompanied by a tall boy who goes through exaggerated performance of gymnastics over two sticks or two tobacco pipes placed in the form of a cross,) I observe that the piper always marches around swaying his body to and fro. On one occasion the piper, I remember, had a wooden leg, but even this serious obstacle did not prevent, although it retarded, that peculiar gait alluded to; consequently I have arrived at the conclusion that the music (save the mark) cannot be produced without the swaggering style of walking so conspicuous in this individual.

Herds of goats were being driven about the streets for the purpose of being milked, the milk being taken from them as required by the customers. Water does not appear to be very abundant here, and has to be brought from some distance; we met a large number of donkeys, each with three long barrels fastened on its back, carrying water for consumption, to different parts of the town. I was particularly struck by the size and beauty of the mules, the majority being from 10 to 12 hands high, having coats beautifully fine and glossy. The refuse of the streets is carried away in two huge panniers, slung across the backs of these animals. The men employed in driving these scavenger mules were very different to the slow, slouching fellow in fustian who in London sings out "dust-o-o," the Spaniards being tall, slight, active, wiry men, looking equal to anything from picking a pocket to cutting a throat. A great many Moors were to

be seen sauntering along the streets, clad in their peculiar costume, long white cotton tunic, drawers of the same material reaching to the knees, no stockings, the feet being thrust into slippers without heels.

After making a few purchases, we regained the boats, and went on board the "Tanjore" again, having been much pleased with our visit to the historical old rock, and shortly afterwards, with keen appetites rendered still keener by our walk, put ourselves outside our breakfast in a way which was startling to behold! Immediately facing Gibraltar is a high hill on the top of which can be seen a small pillar or monument; this is called Queen Isabella's chair, and the following legend is connected with it:—When the English fleet had possession of the Harbour, and were bombarding the town of Gibraltar, Queen Isabella, with some of her troops, was stationed on the hill watching the battle. A gunner on board one of the English ships, having observed the Queen and her guards there, informed his commander, and asked if he would allow him to put a cannon ball into her lap. The commander replied "No, for every ball that lodges in Gibraltar passes through Queen Isabella's heart." Of course I cannot vouch for the truth of this anecdote, but I was assured by my informant, (one of the sailors who had more intelligence than is usually found amongst rough seamen) that it was quite true.

CHAPTER III.

At 9 precisely the order was given to weigh anchor, the sailors trotted round the capstan to the lively airs played by the fifer, and in a few minutes we steamed out of the harbour, turned the point which juts out into the sea, and left the beautiful Bay behind us. We kept close to the land for some time, and were much interested in the enormous rocks and cliffs which line the Spanish Coast for miles after passing Gibraltar.

The wind blew freshly from the east, and a heavy sea was running, and the ship rolled so much that I again began to fear an involuntary repetition of my performance in the Bay of Biscay. To add to my anxiety the old Salts, by way of consolation, assured me that passengers always were sick after going on shore for even a very short time. However, I managed (with some difficulty) to keep my spirits up, and, what was more important perhaps, to keep the contents of my stomach down. The Mediteranean being an inland sea has a reputation for calms, and it is very rarely indeed that a rough sea lasts more than a few hours, the white squalls, which are sometimes very destructive, being the only cause of anxiety to the mariners; but we experienced, up to a day's sail from Malta, unusually rough weather, an old sailor assured me, that he had sailed up the Mediteranean at all times of the year, more than 100 times, and he never experienced such a continuation of head winds and heavy

sea before. At noon we were again out of sight of land, and with the exception of a few vessels which passed us nothing occurred to break the monotony of the day. Friday and Saturday passed much in the same way, the sea still continuing rough, but in appearance, lovely beyond description.

I had often heard that the sea looked so blue nowhere as in the Mediteranean, and I really think it must be so, for a purer or a deeper blue than that of the water when the sun shone on it, could not possibly be imagined, and the white curling crests of the waves hissing and sputtering in every direction formed a sight which was always delightful to look upon, and which will always be fresh in my memory. I used to spend hours looking over the side of the steamer, and watching the waves as they leapt up to meet the bows of the vessel, and were dashed into spray, curling, twisting and eddying into the most fanciful shapes, and covering the surface of the water all around the ship with white hissing, seething foam.

On Sunday divine service was again held in the saloon, and a great many more passengers attended than on the previous Sunday, the ladies in particular shewing in strong force, they having like myself got over their difficulties, and having acquired their "sea legs." Up to this time the temperature continued very low, the thermometer on deck registering in the shade only 60°, and in the sleeping apartments 70°, this was caused

doubtless by the wind blowing so steadily from the East. However, on the afternoon of this day the wind suddenly ceased, and the thermometer rose several degrees in a very short time. On the following day, Monday, the sun was so hot that we were compelled to have the awning spread over the ship. As we approached Malta, we passed a great many steamers and vessels of all sizes. One steamer in particular attracted our attention, being apparently a passenger ship like the one we were in, but much larger. On this evening I suggested, and after some difficulty succeeded in having several sets of Quadrilles, Polkas, and Country Dances, the latter proving most attractive and after a night or two they became so popular on board that they were continued until we reached Alexandria. After the sun had sunk beneath the horizon, the dew fell so very heavily, that in less than an hour the decks were as wet as if they had just been washed; this rendered dancing rather dangerous, but we used then to don our thick coats, bring our chairs on deck, and have some singing; every one who could sing gave a song in turn, the audience joining in the chorus! In this way we managed to spend our evenings very pleasantly, and very often the bell had struck 10 before we retired to our cabins.

On the following day a little incident occurred which in some degree relieved our *ennui*. About noon we sighted a small ship, which appeared to be steering straight down upon us. As we approached, we

noticed that she was making signals to us by means of flags, of various colors and shapes. This caused a good deal of speculation as to what she was and what she wanted. We passed within hailing distance, and our steamer also signalled. She proved to be a trading vessel, proceeding to England with fruit, from some port on the coast of the Mediterranean, and she signalled us her name, and also her wish to be reported at Malta, from thence the agents would telegraph to London, where she was bound. The heat now increased daily, the wind having entirely fallen away. In the fore-part of the ship under the canvass awning it was very pleasant, the current of air caused by the rapid passage of the ship through the water tempering the heat, which otherwise would have been excessive. We had for some hours been sailing along the coast of Africa, but were not close enough to distinguish any peculiarity which might have existed in the land. It appeared to be barren, rocky, entirely destitute of herbage, and very mountainous. One large rock jutted a long way out into the sea, and upon this a very fine light-house had been erected, at the expense, I believe, of the French Government. Shortly after passing this, the Island of Gozo was sighted. This island being separated only by a narrow channel, is generally included under the one name Malta, except by the natives and inhabitants. Directly it was known that we were not many hours' sail from this our second port, a great deal of excitement

was aroused on board. Every one rushed on deck to get a view of the place, and the amount of gazing and spying was astonishing, while the multiplicity of questions put to the seamen must have annoyed those worthy fellows more than a little. Then, as the steamer was to take in a fresh supply of coal at Malta, and as this would occupy several hours, every one determined to go on shore and great were the preparations made in consequence.

The Chinese women in particular were very careful in preparing their toilet, and when they had completed it, strutted about the deck in the bluest of trousers and the whitest of shirts, shoes with toes turned back over the foot in the genuine Chinese style, and their hair twisted up in the most elaborate teapot fashion, and adorned with long gold pins placed at right angles. The Indian Ayahs were not less gorgeously attired, although in quite a different style. I, too, in common with the others, put on my lightest clothing, for the sun was intensely hot, and I had made up my mind to see all that was to be seen in Malta, and to jot down notes for my diary. When I again came on deck, we were sailing along close to the shore, the appearance of which was rather strange and unusual. The land and rocks were of a rich yellow color, so different from any I had seen before that it looked most peculiar. The weak points were all well provided with batteries and fortifications, but the country looked very rocky, barren, and thinly-populated. A few villages were scattered here and

there, but no town of any size was passed until we reached Malta. A short distance from the harbour, we passed a fleet of Greek fishing boats busily engaged in catching small pink fish which are much prized in this locality. Having rounded an angle in the land, we came straight in front of the town and harbour. The houses and general style of the buildings, as they appear from the harbour, cannot fail to prove very striking and interesting to one, who has been accustomed to no more change in the style of house architecture, than English towns offer. The houses, and, in fact, the land as well, look as if they had been covered with yellow ochre. The harbour is a natural one, the entrance being a long, narrow channel, both sides of which are so strongly fortified from the water's edge to a considerable height, that I believe it would be impossible for a ship, no matter how well armed, to effect an entrance were it opposed. From every available angle and corner, and on both sides, scores of great black, gaping, guns grinned down upon us in a manner which was almost enough to strike our hearts with terror. The harbour was entirely destitute of vessels, but a dry dock, farther in shore, appeared to be well stocked with ships of various sizes; their tall masts and trim square yards looking like a small forest amongst the quaint towers and spires of the town.

As soon as the steamer was moored, several boats came along side filled with shouting, gesticulating, half-naked Maltese divers, of whom I had been told by my friend

Mr. D. These men and boys are wonderfully expert in their art, and rarely failed to catch the coin, no matter how small, or how sharply it was thrown into the water. At first, the money was dropped into the water pretty freely, and the men would watch the coin and plunge into the water, dive beneath the coin, catch it, and bring it up to the surface in an incredibly short space of time. After a time when the money was thrown to them less frequently they offered for a shilling to dive right under the steamer, and come up on the opposite side; this I was very anxious to see, but having been informed that it was only a trick to get the money, I, perhaps wisely, kept the coin in my pocket. Not the least amusing part was, to hear the fellows speaking English, of which they had picked up just enough to ask for money to dive for. Consequently, when business became slack with them, they endeavoured to improve it by shouting, "*please throwee in silver money, gentlemen.*" I afterwards learnt, that the *sharkee fish* which they were so anxious to '*fightee*' existed in these parts only in their own imaginations. It was very amusing to watch these clever, and almost amphibious, individuals diving and floating about. I think they remained in the water nearly the whole day, for when we returned from shore in the evening, they were still in the water, shouting, "do please gentlemen, throw silver money and we fitee sharkee fish."

The steamer having been safely moored to the buoys, we, after having ascertained that the ship was to sail at 8 P. M., got into one of the numerous boats which crowded around, and put off for the shore. The sun was intensely hot, but fortunately the boat was protected by an awning, so that we did not feel much distressed until we landed. The boats were of a very peculiar shape, and painted a bright green color, and, judging from the numbers which were crowding around the steamer and the landing stage, I should fancy they were largely patronized by the inhabitants of this place, in the cool of the evening. A long and handsome flight of stone steps, made of Maltese stone, (a very hard and durable stone bearing an excellent polish) led from the water's edge to the entrance of the town. This was also protected from the intense heat by a very handsome awning. The road to the town runs under a portion of the ramparts, and in passing through this small tunnel, the deliciously cool atmosphere, contrasted most favourably with the intolerable heat in the sun. Having secured, from a Police Officer, the services of a guide who spoke English tolerably well, we started off on our voyage of discovery and investigation. The streets, or strada, as they are called here, are for the most part named after some Saint, who, in days gone by, patronised this place. Strada St. Lucia, Strada St. Mark, Strada St. this and Strada St. that met our eyes at every angle. They are very narrow, are all paved throughout

with large blocks of Maltese stone, and, with few exceptions, are entirely without a footwalk of any kind. The houses are lofty and irregular, the majority being from three to four stories high. The windows are protected by stout shades and venetians, similar to those used in India, and are built out from the wall, in order I imagine to catch any breeze which might find its way up or down the street. The inhabitants, or at all events the Maltese, are without exception the laziest, dirtiest, and most villanous looking lot of cut throats it has ever, even up to this time, been my lot to see. They are nearly as dark as the Bengalis, and much darker than the natives of the Northern parts of India, and the majority, particularly of the lower class, wear neither shoes nor stockings. They appear to have little or nothing to do, indeed sleep appears to be the chief aim of their existence, for in every street dozens of great lazy, dirty-looking fellows were lying about fast asleep. Even the more respectable shopkeepers are afflicted with a similar desire to sleep, for in almost every other Maltese shop, the proprietor could be seen seated on a stool nodding and snoring away in a manner, quite inspiring to witness.

The town is literally infested with beggars of both sexes, and of all ages, sizes and colours, and the constant annoyance caused by their incessant solicitations was unbearable, and I think, as a rule, they received more kicks than halfpence. The costume worn by the better class

Maltese is much the same as that adopted by Englishmen in hot climates ; but the clothing of the poorer inhabitants resembles very much that worn by the Spaniards at *Gibraltar*. The women wear a peculiar kind of mantle, or, as I believe it is called, mantilla, made of black cotton or silk, according to the position and means of the wearer ; it covers the head, projecting about six or eight inches in front of the face, and is drawn in at the sides, the end falling over the shoulders half way down the back so as to form a bonnet and mantle. Imagine one of the old coal scuttle bonnets with a black mantle attached to the curtain, and you will have a fair idea of what this mantilla is like. It struck me as being most peculiar that this head-dress was worn by all the Maltese women, because the heat caused by such a close fitting black head-dress in such a warm climate must be exceedingly oppressive, if not dangerous. Having made inquiries, I was told that when Malta was first taken by the French, the Emperor permitted his soldiers to have one day of plunder and outrage. Since that day the women, in order to express their horror and grief, have always adopted this peculiar style of head dress. The English language is well understood by many of the natives, but as a rule Maltese, which is a strange mixture of Arabic and Spanish, is spoken.

Our time unfortunately was too short to permit of a close inspection of the numerous places of interest

here, consequently we were compelled to con-

tent ourselves with a visit to the Governor's Palace and the Church of St. John. Roman Catholic Churches are famous for the beauty of their internal decorations, but few can compete in this respect with this celebrated church at Malta.

Government House, the official residence of the Governor of Malta, is a truly magnificent edifice, built entirely of that peculiar stone which appears to abound in this place. A very fine garden in front of the grand entrance has been beautifully laid out, and flowers and tropical plants grow in the greatest luxuriance. In the centre of the garden is a splendid specimen of the *Arancaria excelsa*, (Norfolk Island pine,) which was planted by Prince Albert in the year 1858, and now has attained the height of 40 or 50 feet. In the same place is also to be seen a very ancient clock; standing upon which are four black figures which strike the hours and quarters. This clock indicates the hour of the day, the day of the month, and the day of the week on three separate dials. We entered the house and ascended the grand staircase which is circular in form, very wide, the steps being very short and made of pure Sicilian polished marble, the cost of which alone must have been enormous.

We first entered the dining room which is a magnificent apartment, furnished and decorated in the most princely style. Splendid portraits in oil of historical celebrities, life-size, are suspended from the walls all around the room. Amongst them we recognised portraits of the

Queen, George IV, George III, William II, and many more whom I have now forgotten.

We were next conducted into the Ball Room. This is also a truly regal apartment, and is eminently fitted for such brilliant displays as the Government or State Balls are said to be. The room is lighted by huge chandeliers of the most exquisite workmanship. Eight colossal mirrors are attached to the walls, and these by their reflections not only appear to increase the size of the room, but add greatly to its splendour by reflecting the brilliant lights and the gorgeous decorations in every direction. During the cold weather many Balls are given by the Governor, but when the hot weather sets in, he retires to his country residence a few miles from the town. The pillars which support the ceiling are painted white, relieved with gold, as also are the ceiling and the cornices.

We next entered the Council Chamber, and this, if not the most handsome, is by far the most costly in its decoration of any in the palace. The walls are covered with tapestry of the most marvellous description; there are 18 pieces, the dimensions of each being about 24 feet high and 20 feet wide. The subjects represent the four quarters of the globe in allegory, and the work is so perfectly finished, that notwithstanding the fact of their being more than 180 years old, the color is so good that from a distance they look like splendid old oil-paintings or frescoes. The men, horses, reptiles, trees, &c., &c.,

which form the various subjects are so truthfully drawn, and so perfect in color, light and shade, that in contemplating these master-pieces of needlework the mind is lost in wonder and admiration. No description, however graphic, can convey the slightest idea of the grandeur and dignity of these superb productions; and the most skilful and ingenious example of modern needlework sinks into utter insignificance when compared with them. The room is about 30 feet high, the spaces between the top of the tapestry and the ceiling being filled up with fresco painting, the style and color of the tapestry having been so skilfully imitated that from a distance it is difficult to distinguish the one from the other. Amongst other articles of interest in this room we noticed a stone-table more than 300 years old, made of polished Maltese stone, this is much prized both from its antiquity and the beauty of its manufacture.

We passed into the corridor leading to the Armoury. It is 150 feet long, and on both sides are arranged, at a distance of 6 feet apart, numerous effigies of men in armour, bearing shields and lances. At the end of the corridor next the Armoury rises a splendid flight of steps, and at the top, on each side of the door, is a colossal lion carved in Maltese stone; this gives a noble and striking appearance to the entrance of this justly celebrated Armoury, which, like all others, is simply a repository for old arms and warlike relics associated with the island, and partakes much of the

similar places. It would be impossible to mention a hundredth part of the interesting relics to be seen here, a few of the more important ones must suffice. All around the room at short distances are effigies of men in armour bearing flags, spears, swords, lances and other warlike weapons. One in particular attracted our attention, holding an old flag of the 91st Highlanders. This, from its tattered condition, bears grim testimony to the many hard-fought battles and glorious victories through which it had been safely borne. The Armoury is 258 feet long, and 40 feet wide. The walls are hung with portraits of old celebrities; amongst them we noticed a very fine one of Androse the VI, the only Pope England has ever had, and I trust ever will have. Between the pictures are trophies of arms, composed of swords, spears, clubs, battle-axes, pistols and other sanguinary weapons which were in use hundreds of years ago. They are arranged according to the countries from which they were obtained. Amongst the great curiosities which were pointed out to us, we particularly noticed two rifles more than 200 years old; a double-barrelled gun, the barrels being placed vertically instead of horizontally as in the present day, and a breach-loading cannon fixed on a tripod, more than 300 years old. This weapon is about 12 feet long and the bore 1 inch in diameter; the method of loading is extremely simple, and with a little modification would bear favorable comparison with many

consisted essentially of a tube, open at both ends, one of which was closed with an iron plug attached to a rack and pinion. When the gun was loaded the plug was inserted and a sliding bar raised to keep it in its position. We were also shewn a Turkish cannon 500 years old, and made entirely without iron. The bore is 4 inches in diameter, consisting of a thin tube of copper about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in thickness. Around this had been wound ropes of hemp and hide until it was considered sufficiently strong to resist the force of the explosion. I have no doubt when made, the gun was considered a very formidable weapon, but it would look a curious object beside one of the mighty cannon employed in modern warfare. In hermetically-sealed glass-boxes were numerous relics of great interest. The sword, battle-axe and part of the Armour, of Dragut, Pacha of Tripoli, which were worn by him in the battle in which he was slain in the year 1565. In another glass-case the "Act of Donation of the Islands of Malta and Gozo to the order of St. John of Jerusalem by Charles V., in 1530," written on parchment in Latin; it is in an excellent state of preservation. The trumpet which sounded the retreat from Rhodes in 1522, and the Bull of Paschal, referring to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, and dated A. D. 1113. This is in a splendid state of preservation, the writing being clear, and the parchment almost as white as if only a few weeks old.

At the end of the hall is the effigy of a Spanish giant, who is said to have been 7 feet 4 inches in height, and to have been proportionately strong. The armour is immensely heavy, the helmet alone, which is of wrought iron, weighs more than 40 pounds; a weapon of immense weight, combining both sword and pistol, also formed part of the equipment of this man.

Hundreds of other articles of the greatest interest were also pointed out and described to us, but our time being limited I was compelled to be contented with the few notes I have given.

Descending the staircase, and leaving by another entrance, we stumbled upon a State carriage more than four hundred years old, which was formerly the property of the Great Napoleon. Into this rickety vehicle, I packed my not very light corpus, in order that with my then companions I could say that I had sat in the carriage of the man who at one time was the terror of Europe.

After bravely struggling with quite an army of beggars and coming off successful, we entered a *café* in order to refresh the inner man with an ice or something equally refreshing. Here we were much amused by the "Arabs," who gave us a gratuitous concert, consisting of various fantasias on the most popular Music Hall tunes of the day, performed on cracked harps, squeaking fiddles, and an accordion afflicted with chronic asthma—"Champagne Charlie," "Not for Joe," "The Comet of the West," "The Organ Grinder," &c., &c. were all performed for

our delectation. We were here completely surrounded by a lot of men of a decidedly Israelitish cast of countenance, who incessantly bothered us to purchase some of their miscellaneous stock, which consisted of Maltese lace, stone crosses and rings, ornaments and charms made of that pretty silver filligree work for which Malta is so famous. However, not liking the look of the individuals, we declined to purchase.

After a short stay here we visited the celebrated Roman Catholic Church of St. John. The out-side has little or no pretensions to architectural beauty, being plainly built and almost entirely without ornament. But this is completely compensated for by the unspeakable beauties of its interior. Roman Catholics are, as a rule, remarkable for the skill and taste displayed in the decoration of their churches, and I have frequently seen in London and other important towns in England, magnificent specimens of their skill in this direction; but the grandest I ever saw in London sinks into utter insignificance and plainness when compared with this most wonderful and indescribably beautiful church at Malta. No words can describe it, or convey an adequate idea of its beauties; it must be seen. Immediately on entering the noble and imposing edifice, the scene which bursts upon the sight strikes one with reverence and awe; for, whatever may be the religious opinions of the visitor, even if he possess no religious principles, if he has the ordinary feelings of humanity,

his fellow-creatures, he cannot avoid being imbued with a sense which approaches almost to fear lest the building so grand, so pure, and so beautiful, be defiled by his presence. Such was my experience, and although four years have passed away since that time, the impression created on my mind is at this moment as keen and as vivid as it was then.

The effect produced on the mind of the individual who has been unaccustomed to such imposing displays in places of worship is, I think, well-understood by the Catholic priests; and, I believe, it is partly due to this kind of superstitious dread, that they possess and hold such a power over the minds of their congregations, particularly those of the uneducated classes. A man of no fixed religious principles, or a man who is not blessed with a well-balanced mind, must in entering a church of this description experience emotions which a Protestant Church or chapel would fail to create.

Several priests who were in the church were very attentive, and appeared to derive much pleasure from shewing and describing the numerous places and ornaments which the church contains, and of which they are justly proud. I was accompanied by two Roman Catholic ladies and a gentleman of the same religion. The ladies were Scotch, the gentleman was Irish, I being the only Protestant in the building. However, that made little or no difference, for I always make it a point to respect the religious opinions of every man, and

I have found my own equally respected. The body of the church is entirely destitute of chairs. This, I imagine, is owing to the marvellous beauty of the floor which is one of the greatest works of art of which the church can boast. The floor is made of pure marble slabs each of which covers the tomb of some celebrated man. There are 400 tombs beneath the floor, and consequently 400 marble slabs, each of which contains in Mosaic work, in the native language, the name, title, age, &c., of the man whose memory it perpetuates, together with the coat of arms and motto. As may be imagined, the effect produced by 400 such as these, beautifully polished and laid in the most perfect manner, is indescribably grand. Immediately in front of the entrance, is the altar, which is also beautiful in the extreme. It was, of course, gorgeously decorated and looked very grand and imposing, but the Reredos or altar piece attracted my attention most. It represents the Baptism of our Saviour by St. John. The figures are life-size, and are carved out of one solid block of pure Sicilian marble. The figures are admirably designed, and the execution is perfect. This is considered to be one of the most wonderful pieces of sculpture in existence. Its age is unknown.

The Church contains three very fine organs,—two placed on either side of the altar, and the third over and behind it. These are also beautifully painted in perfect harmony, with the rest of the interior. On the left of the altar are two massive silver gates, on the right

bronze, gilded. The original gates were made of pure gold, but when Napoleon's army sacked Malta, these were taken on board one of the French ships. The ship was afterwards sunk by the English fleet, and the gates which must have been worth an incalculable sum, were lost. One unusual feature in this church is, that it contains a distinct room or chapel, with an altar for every European nation, and also a throne for Her Majesty the Queen. The throne is placed on the right of the altar and about half way up the aisle. It is made of crimson cloth, surmounted by a canopy and a crown, and bears the Royal Arms of England in gold.

We descended into the vaults where fresh objects of beauty and interest awaited our inspection. Unfortunately the short time we had at our disposal prevented my taking as many notes of these as I otherwise should have done. The vaults contained a great many tombs made of pure marble, and on the top of each, reclined at full length the effigy of the individual whose ashes reposed beneath. These vaults contain the remains of all the principal knights of St. John of Jerusalem and of many Bishops and dignitaries of the church; amongst them we particularly noticed, from the beauty of the tombs and the reverence in which they were held by the priests who accompanied us, the tombs of Philip de Vilus le Sadan, who built the fortifications of Malta, and who died A. D. 1577; Cardinal Lobeux Verdatœ; also six smaller statues which were brought from Jerusalem more than 600 years

ago; the tombs of Valetta, the builder of the town, which bears his name, and of L de la Cassiere the founder of the Church.

Numerous paintings by the old masters are hung all about the church, amongst which I was particularly struck with the Holy Family by Michael Angelo, St. John in the Desert by Raphael, St. Jerome by Caravaggio, Mary Magdalene by Sebasten Preolo, and others of the greatest beauty and value. I am passionately fond of oilpaintings, and could have feasted my eyes on these masterpieces for hours, but unfortunately was compelled to content myself with a passing glance at each. We also saw the tomb of Gregory Garafa, surmounted by a beautiful statue representing a shield or coat of arms. The pillars supporting this, are of pure Mosaic work.

I searched every stationer's shop in the hopes of getting a published description of this marvellous place, but it appeared to be out of print. Only two copies had been in existence for some years, and these had been purchased at a fabulous price by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Island. I left the building very reluctantly, for I was not only charmed by its numerous beauties, but the glorious old paintings and sculpture seemed to exercise a species of fascination over me, which I could hardly resist.

After leaving this I went into several of the lace shops to procure some of the lace, for the manufacture of which this place is so famous.

appeared to take advantage of the arrival of the mail-steamer, for the most exorbitant prices were asked for their goods. However, after a good deal of talking and persuading on the part of the customers, they were prevailed upon to take prices about half those at first demanded. In this peculiarity we found all alike, and after experience taught me that this system begins at Gibraltar, and continues more or less in force at every port touched by the mail-steamers. In India it is perfectly understood by Europeans, and on purchasing anything from a native the usual way is to offer a fourth of the price asked, and in nine cases out of ten that will be near the value of the article. After making my purchases, and paying a most extortionate bill for a very inferior dinner at one of the best hotels the place boasts, I returned to the landing place and again embarked.

Evening had now set in, and the air was deliciously calm and cool, forming a striking contrast to the intense heat which had prevailed all day.

Hundreds of pleasure-boats were skimming about in the harbour and in the open sea, and from the immense number of these boats, I should imagine boating to be the usual means of taking exercise adopted in this place. On our way to the steamer we were again surrounded by those amphibious bipeds who appeared to have been in the water the whole of the day, who constantly implored us to throw some money in the water, and who were particularly anxious to dive under the steamer and come

up on the opposite side. However, as most of the passengers had spent as much and probably more than they had intended on the island, their solicitations were taken little notice of. On board we found several of the Maltese Israelites driving a brisk sale amongst the sailors and some of the passengers, and favoured by the darkness which was gradually stealing over us, they contrived to dispose of a large quantity of Birmingham lace, of a very inferior quality at a large profit to themselves, and at the cost of considerable annoyance and chagrin to their customers.

CHAPTER IV.

We steamed out of the harbour about 9 p. m., and in half-an-hour nothing could be seen again but the interminable ocean. The night was calm, and the water looked as smooth as a huge mirror, the moon too shone with a splendour rarely seen in England, the only breeze perceptible was caused by the rapid passage of the steamer as she glided smoothly through the water. All the passengers, with the exception of those who had imbibed too freely of stimulants at Malta, were on deck, grouped about chatting over the events of the day, and many leaning over the bulwarks of the vessel and watching the spray thrown up by the steamer. The water swarmed with those phosphorescent animalcules which give such a lovely appearance to the sea when broken into foam, every few minutes a huge fish would leap out of the water which would assume the appearance of liquid gold. At the bow of the steamer and all around the sides, and more particularly at the stern where the rapid revolution of the screw lashed the water into foam, it looked marvelously beautiful.

We were thus engaged, when suddenly a figure clad from head to foot in white was seen rushing about the ship in a most frantic manner, giving utterance to sobs and broken ejaculations. Upon going forward I found the figure to be that of the old Chinese Ayah, who had lost a purse containing all her money and two valuable

gold earrings. The distress of the old woman was painful to see, and as she could only indistinctly make herself understood, her suffering was all the more increased. After a little questioning, I found that she had been purchasing some trifling articles of jewellery from the Maltese hawkers on board, and amongst other things had bought a pair of silver earrings, removing her gold ones and putting them into her purse which contained her money; this the men appeared to have seen, and when her attention was directed in another way, one of them managed to relieve her of it. For sometime the poor old thing was inconsolable, but upon promising to get a subscription for her on the following day, she was induced to go down to her cabin. The next day a subscription was commenced, and as much commiseration was felt for her, a sum amounting to several pounds was collected.

The night was very lovely, and the sea being so calm and still, the passengers were induced to remain on deck much later than usual, a dance was proposed and at once formed, the band being provided by sailors who performed as before on such instruments as could be found: a fife and a violin accompanied by bones and dripping pan. However we enjoyed it very much and kept dancing until nearly 11 o'clock, long after all the lights had been extinguished. On the following morning we were all startled by the hoarse "fog horn" being blown every five minutes, and on going on deck I found the fog so dense that it was almost impossible to see ten yards

ahead. We were consequently obliged to steam on very slowly, and the fog-horn was sounded at frequent intervals for the greater part of the morning, in order to prevent a collision with any ships approaching. About 11-30 the fog dispersed, and the air became again bright and clear, and the water broken into tiny waves by the slight breeze which sprung up, added considerably to the beauty of the deep blue sea. Nothing of importance occurred on this day, the passengers amused themselves as usual by playing draughts, chess and cards, reading, smoking and sleeping until the evening, when dancing was renewed with increased vigour. The dew, however, being exceedingly heavy, the deck was quite wet and slippery; consequently we were reluctantly compelled to bring it to a close earlier than we intended. The next day being the last we were to spend on board, every one was busy packing and preparing to leave the vessel. We were to take with us only such parcels as were necessary for our personal comfort during our stay in Alexandria, the bulk being sent on at once to Suez. All the luggage was hoisted on deck, and the ship became decidedly crowded and uncomfortable. As many passengers were going to Bombay, and would consequently leave us at Suez to embark in another vessel, we determined to celebrate this evening, our last on board the *Tanjore*, in an unusually jolly manner. At dusk the dancing was resumed as usual, and when the deck became too slippery for that purpose, we went into our saloon, and our dancing

having become somewhat loosened by the extra quantity of wines and spirits reserved for this evening, an enormous quantity of toasts were proposed, speeches made, healths drunk, and as the majority of the speeches were remarkable, neither for rhetoric nor grammar, this was not by any means the least amusing part of our voyage on this side.

It had been decided that the money collected for the Chinese Ayah should be presented to her on this evening, and as I had taken a somewhat active part in collecting the money, and could, by imitating the Ayah's style of speaking English, make myself pretty well understood, I was requested by the chairman for the evening to make an appropriate speech, and hand over the present in a formal manner.

Although I knew I should have to hand over the money to her, I had no idea that I was expected to make a speech in Chinese English on the occasion, and when requested to do so by the chairman, I was taken completely by surprise. However, a moment's reflection convinced me, that it was more for the fun of the thing than anything formal, and I consented. The Ayah was then sent for, and I, after making some remarks to her in "Chinese English," presented her with the money which amounted to several pounds. The poor old woman was very much affected, and, with tears streaming down her face, said, in her own peculiar and amusing way, "how muchee she thanked all the good ladies and gentlemen

who had given her the money, she would always, when she prayed to her God, ask him to bless them all for their kindness." After saying this, and my repeating it in better English to the passengers, she left, sobbing like a child. This little incident occupied my mind for several days, and I am sure there was not one on board, who saw how gratefully the gift was received, but must have felt glad at having contributed to it, even in the smallest degree. It was a source of infinite satisfaction to me to have been instrumental in getting up the subscription.

Songs were then proposed, and after many had been sung in a more or less skilful manner, we all adjourned to the deck, and joining hands in the orthodox style, sung that old song which is supposed to move every Scot to tears, but which signally failed in this instance, "Auld lang Syne." Shortly after this all retired, and nothing could be heard on board but the eternal throbbing of the engine, and the "Alls well" of the men on the look-out.

On the following morning we heard the welcome news that land was in sight, whereupon all turned out and went on deck. The morning was beautifully bright and cool, and although the sun had not yet gilded the sea with his rays, land was distinctly visible, the land that in the time of Moses was in its prime, and that has been old and decaying throughout all the growth and history of the present world.

The steamer had been beating about for several hours previously, as the harbour of Alexandria is particularly difficult to navigate, and large vessels rarely, if ever, attempt to sail in after the sun has gone down. After remaining on deck a short time, I went below to dispose of the hard biscuits and indifferent coffee which a few minutes in the keen fresh sea-breeze had given me an unusual appetite for. When I again ascended to the deck, the sun had risen in all his glory, "a sun that had already wakened Memmon to his daily music, and had kissed the mighty pyramids upon its way to greet the bounding, laughing sea." The light-house, from which the light had been shining so proudly all the night, and which had now shrunk from the glorious rays of the rising sun, marks the site of one of the seven wonders of the world—the first great light-house that illumined the Mediterranean. All along the level shore around the harbour, lie the ruins of the city of Alexander the Great now studded with windmills above, and crowded with catacombs beneath.

The entrance to the harbour, which is egg-shaped, is difficult in the extreme. Huge sunken rocks lie in every direction, and as the water is exceedingly shallow, it is only by taking the winding and tortuitous route marked out by buoys, that a vessel of any dimensions can enter in safety. The water for more than a mile was so shallow that the sandy bed was quite discernable, and the immense rocks over which we actually passed, appeared to

be so very little beneath the surface that I trembled and expected every moment to hear a grinding crash announcing that the ship had struck. However we passed on in safety, the Egyptian pilot giving his orders in his own guttural tongue to the officer by whom it was translated to the men at the wheel. The harbour was crowded with vessels of every description and every nation, from the splendid war-ships of the Viceroy of Egypt and the more peaceful (though but little smaller) steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company and the Messageries Imperiales, a French line of packets, to the smaller and less pretentious steamers and sailing craft that carry on the commerce of the Mediterranean. On the left of the harbour is built the palace of the Viceroy, a large and substantial building, but without any claims to artistic elegance. Immediately behind it is the Zenana or Harem.

After the "Tanjore" had taken up her moorings, we were surrounded by scores of boats which with their swarthy crews were crowding about both sides of the steamer, jostling each other for the nearest place, shouting, jabbering and gesticulating in a most laughable manner. In some, the crews were half-naked; in others, somewhat decently dressed; but every where the bare brown legs, the single smock and the close fitting fez cap, with black silk tassel. Here and there a huge turban was to be seen, indicating some superiority in the

wearer, who leisurely smoked his pipe among the din and confusion that prevailed.

As all the passengers were to land at 9 o'clock, no time was to be lost in collecting and arranging our luggage, as with the exception of a small portmanteau which could be carried in the hand, we were to see nothing more of our luggage until we arrived on board the other steamer at Suez. Breakfast was ready at 7-30, but worry, excitement, and the horrible din and confusion which prevailed on every side, quite disposed of any appetite that under ordinary circumstances I might have possessed. The steam crane by which the mail bags were hoisted on deck, creating the most frightful row and shaking the steamer from stem to stern, the shouting and swearing of the English sailors, the guttural jabber of the Arabs and Egyptians who were working on the vessel, combined to make a scene of the most unutterable confusion. The Arabs and Egyptians were employed to remove the luggage, and the slow mechanical way in which they went about their work, made one feel very much inclined to assist them by the administration of a smart kick in their nether region. These fellows and the English sailors appeared to regard one another with the most intense hatred and disgust. Some of the Arabs had picked up a little of that very choice English which seamen as a rule are perfect in, for every few minutes, amid the rattle and din going on, arose such expressions as these, uttered with an emphasis that proved how the

man's sentiments agreed with his words, "—*You big dam English hombag ! "yāaah !!*" &c., &c. I must not forget to mention that the hulk which the Peninsular and Oriental Company use at this place to remove the heavy luggage is the remains of the "*Ariadne*," the vessel which Captain Marryat commanded, and in which nearly all his famous novels were written. The *Ariadne* was called a frigate in those days, and although not one-third the length of the "*Tanjore*" used to carry three masts and fourteen guns. The contrast between this old hulk and the noble frigates of the Egyptian Government was striking in the extreme. The sailors told me that the hulk was as hard as iron, and would in all probability last another fifty years.

At the appointed time a small steamer came along side, and after all personal luggage had been put on board, the passengers embarked. A few minutes steaming brought us alongside the offices and wharfs of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. We landed without difficulty, and after passing under the lofty portion of the Company's warehouse and offices, we emerged into the street. Up to this time all had been fair sailing. The endless confusion on board was annoying in the extreme; but as we were not actually interested in it, our tempers were only a little disturbed; but how shall I describe my own feelings and those of my fellow passengers when we were literally torn to pieces by the thousands of touts, who had waited for their prey where they could the least help themselves!

About a dozen omnibuses and cabs were drawn up in the street, and these were expected to accommodate over 150 passengers. Donkeys by the hundred, mules and camels in every direction. But what a confusion of tongues, Arabic, French, Maltese, Italian, German and broken English (very much broken) all rush upon the ear at the same instant, but the language of signs expressed more emphatically than words, the one idea which animated every tongue. "*Good donkey sar ! Want good fine donkey sar, that not good donkey sar. Dis dam fine donkey sar. P. and O. Hotel sar de best, Odders not good.*" Such sentences arose every minute above the confusion of tongues which like a stormy sea raged around us.

After battling resolutely and gradually advancing inch by inch, I at length reached a small omnibus into which were packed about twice as many people as it was constructed to carry, and having deposited my portmanteau, &c., on the top, and myself on the step, we were driven off to the hotel.

We passed through numerous streets, which for filth and squalor surpassed anything of the kind I had previously seen. The shops were entirely without windows, and were filled with every kind of merchandise. The owner was generally seated on a small square piece of matting placed on the ground in front of the stall, smoking an immense hookah. A short drive brought us into the Grand Square, which is really a splendid place, nearly a mile in length and several hundreds of feet

in width, the houses and shops on both sides being either French, English, Italian or German. In this square the Peninsular and Oriental Hotel is situated. The hotel is kept by a Frenchman, and, I need scarcely add, is thoroughly French in all its arrangements. The hall, the noble flight of stairs, and the dining room 60 feet in length, are paved with white marble. This gives a coolness to the place which is perfectly luxurious. On looking out into the square beneath it was difficult to realise the fact that I was actually in Egypt; on all sides were houses built in the French style, with shops displaying English cottons and French perfumery, and covered with English, French, Greek, Italian and German signs. After a short stay, we procured the services of a guide (a Turk, who spoke English fairly,) and started off to see the lions. Our first visit was to the Post Office, where some of the passengers expected letters, from thence we proceeded to the Bank of Egypt where I had promised to call on a gentleman whose sister I had the pleasure of knowing in London. He told me in course of conversation that the present season was the hottest Alexandria had experienced for some years, and that the hot wind blowing in over the desert and laden with fine sand was distressing to a degree. The building was of a very unpretentious kind, and the fittings inside were very meagre, forming a striking contrast to the magnificent Banks in London, or their still

The business-like manner in which every thing was conducted in the hotel impressed me much. On ascending the stairs we found on the first landing a small office, to the clerk in charge we stated the number of rooms we wished to occupy, and the number of packages we had with us. This was duly entered into a book and a numbered ticket was given to us. On the top of the stairs was an attendant who took us to the room corresponding with the number on the ticket. The bed-room was large, cool and comfortable, and all the beds were provided with mosquito-curtains. The charges too were moderate, 13/6 per day including everything but wines and spirits. After looking through the bazar, which by the way was remarkable for nothing but fruit, flies and filth, we visited one or two establishments kept by French tailors, as the weather on the other side promised to be unusually hot, and many of us were anxious to procure something more akin to 'bookmuslin' than we then wore. The charges of these valiant knights of the needle were simply awful. One fellow wanted twenty Rupees, (£2) for an alpaca coat, worth in England, certainly not more than five. After a good deal of haggling I managed to get it for sixteen rupees (£1.12). I found the value of it however when we got into the Red Sea as I shall presently tell you.

After tiffin we started off to see Pompey's Pillar, the Fresh Water Canal, and Cleopatra's Needle. We found some difficulty in procuring a carriage, not that they were

few in number, for they literally swarmed around the doorway of the hotel, but the drivers, who are nearly all Arabs, are such a swindling lot of scoundrels, that our guide would not allow us to have either of them. However, we became impatient at the delay and jumped into the first near us, and told the fellow to drive on. He had moved on a few yards when up drove our guide with the vehicle he had been in search of. We consequently jumped out and seated ourselves in the other. But Mr. Driver No. 1 was evidently not disposed to part with his prey so easily, for he commenced abusing the guide and the other driver in the most awful manner. The fellow actually foamed at the mouth with rage, and finally wound up his long volley of abuse by spitting in the guide's face—an unpardonable insult to a Mussulman. At length we got clear off, and after passing through many of the principal streets we emerged into the open country. Here the first truly oriental scene burst upon our view. Upon a large open space, camels, sheep and oxen were reposing, while their owners were chattering pipe in hand, and a long string of camels laden with merchandise was entering the gate leading to the city. The tall palm lifted its spreading top towards the noon-day sun, while grooves of luxuriant acacias lining the roads, offered their cooling and refreshing shade. Scores of wolfish-looking dogs barked, howled and snapped at our approach: but even above their hideous clamour we heard the myriad voices of birds, “whose freedom had never been invaded by the

sportsman, and whose song was in harmony with the delicious air, and the gorgeous drapery in which all Nature was enwrapped." To complete the picture, the minaret that overlooks the bazar, loomed in the distance, and immediately before us Pompey's Pillar reared its stupendous mass of polished granite in solitary grandeur;—"a monument of buried empires—a sentinel over recent tombs."

"The pillar is the one solitary monument of the old city upon its southern front, and answers to the one standing obelisk that is its solitary monument on the north. Of its origin, history is as silent as the tomb. The inscription on it, first deciphered by Wilkinson, shews it to have been erected by Publius, the prefect of Egypt in honor of Diocletian who captured the city of Alexandria in A. D. 296. But whether it was then first hewn from the quarry or was transported from some decaying temple up the Nile, the Greek lettering does not inform us. If the latter, which is very probable, then this lonely sentinel, an Egyptian column with a Greek inscription to a Roman Emperor, has witnessed in turn the decay of Egypt, of Greece, and of Rome, upon the soil where it still disputes with time the empire of the past. But whatever may be its history or its associations, one cannot look upon this column without feelings of astonishment and awe. Outside of the modern city-walls, away from the present homes of men, but on an eminence

with the meagre, attenuated style of its present architecture, stands this stupendous column of red polished granite, ninety-nine feet in height, by thirty in circumference, its shaft an elegant monolith, measuring seventy-three feet between the pedestal and the capital. It marks the site of an ancient stadium, and as some conjecture, of the gymnasium, which was surrounded with majestic porticos of granite. Now it looks down upon the rude and garish cemetery of the Mohammedans, whose plastered tombs glaring in the sun, crowd around its dismantled base." The above words were written by an American tourist sixteen years ago ; they may be used at the present time, for although in England a much shorter time is quite long enough to alter not only towns but even landscapes, in this dull, sleepy, apathetic country, no change has taken place that interferes with the graphic picture he has so well drawn. The cemetery, that sleeps at the foot of the hill upon which the pillar is erected, has doubtless increased in size, and a few signs of improvement may be seen here and there, but an indescribable atmosphere of decay and ruin appears to hang all over the country, from the fertile fields and gardens so close by to the sterile desert of sand which extends to the horizon. In most countries a monument of such great antiquity would be guarded with the most jealous care, but here it is left to Nature and to the tender mercies of the Egyptian boys, who chip off small pieces from

its base, and offer them to the visitors in return for *bucksheesh*!

On returning to our cab which had been waiting in the road for us, we found that our way turned off at right angles to the road we had just left. After proceeding for a short distance we suddenly plunged into a sea of dust which did not very materially increase our comfort, and the two ponies which drew the cab had great difficulty in making any progress. Shortly afterwards, we came upon a long string of camels heavily laden, proceeding on their way over the desert. Our guide next took us to see an old tomb. We descended a dozen steps cut out in the sand and found ourselves in a large vault, apparently cut out of sandstone. It was thirty feet high, and on each side were large cavities in which Mummies had reposed for thousands of years before being brought to light. Many of these are now in the various museums to be found in most important towns in Europe.

Our next drive was along the banks of the Mahmoodeh or Fresh Water Canal. This canal was opened in 1820. Its construction was a part of the scheme of Mahammed Ali for reviving the commerce of Alexandria with the East. Taking as a base the old canal of Fooah, which was yet in use in the time of the Venetians, and following in part the ancient canopic branch of the Nile, he opened a communication of forty miles between Alexandria and Atfeh on the Rosetta branch. An army of 2,30,000 men

was employed to dig this canal, the earth being scooped out by the hand or with a common hoe, and removed in baskets and sacks, carried on the head or shoulders, and so miserable was the provision for food, clothing and shelter for this vast multitude, that no less than 20,000 are said to have died of hunger and plague. A drive of two miles along the side of the canal was enjoyed very much, the road being on both sides lined with lofty trees, whose branches intermingling over head, effectually protected us from the scorching heat of the sun. The canal is wide and deep, and on both banks are built many mansions surrounded by flowers of every hue, the cactus, acacia, and the tall and graceful palm-tree. Several were surrounded by iron railings, the ornamental gates of which bore the unmistakeable stamp of British manufacture. In the canal bullocks were enjoying themselves, being almost completely under water, the nose being the only part of the body visible. Men, women, and children, clad in "Nature's garb," were bathing and splashing about in the water all together, and they bore our wondering gaze in the most cool and unconcerned manner. Many large Nile boats were lying moored by the side of the canal, most of them being built and ornamented with much taste. Scores of fierce, swarthy-looking men were lying or squatting on the ground, smoking their hookas or drinking coffee; none appeared to have anything to do, and all appeared to be hard at work doing it. Nearly all the women wear the

yashmak, a kind of veil which falls completely over the head, an orifice being cut in it large enough to look through. The superior and indeed the middle classes never go out without this horrible looking affair on, but many of the lower class of women ignore it altogether. The women are mostly small in size, but have a graceful figure and a remarkably erect gait.

After leaving the canal we proceeded to the Viceroy's Garden, but unfortunately we were either before or after the hour at which strangers are admitted. From the glimpses we caught of it, I think it must be a perfect paradise. It appeared to be laid out with exquisite taste, and the immense number of flowers of every hue and fragrance made the air quite heavy with their perfume. The Viceroy's private band plays here on certain days, and it appears to be a favorite place of resort to the wealthy classes of Alexandria.

A short drive brought us to Cleopatra's Needle. The origin of the name appears, like that of Pompey's Pillar, to be buried in obscurity. Historians say that the obelisks have no more relation to Cleopatra than the pillar has to Pompey. The hieroglyphics engraved on them date back to the Exodus, and they were brought to Alexandria from the city of Heliopolis, about a hundred miles to the south. Each pillar is a single block of red granite, seventy feet high and nearly six feet in diameter at the base. How such mighty blocks were hewn from the quarry, transported hundreds of miles,

and erected upon their pedestals, is a mystery not solved by anything yet discovered of ancient mechanic arts. Only one of the obelisks is standing, the other was taken down to be transported to England, but it now lies half-buried in the mud while the one standing is enclosed in the compound of a stone-mason's shop. Besides the pillar and the needles nothing now remains to testify the former splendour of Alexandria, a capital that once vied with Rome, containing 300,000 freemen and as many slaves. Even as late as the seventeenth century it contained 4,000 palaces, 4,000 baths, 400 theatres, 12,000 shops for the sale of vegetables, and 40,000 tributary Jews. A few ruins are pointed out, but these are fast disappearing with the ravages of time. Its name is the only memorial of its founder, and the long range of catacombs along the shore to the west of the city, the sole vestige of its ancient population.

A short drive brought us into the town or rather city by another gate. We passed over a drawbridge thrown across a very deep ditch and passed several of the Viceroy's soldiers, they all wear the red fez cap and look anything but soldier-like. On reaching our hotel we suddenly missed our guide, and no one could account for his strange disappearance. My companions had gone into the hotel, and I was about to follow them, when the man suddenly appeared with a policeman. He begged me to go with him to the corner of the street in order that he might lay a charge against the man who

had insulted him in the early part of the afternoon. Being curious to see how the Egyptians administered justice, I went with the guide. At the corner of the square seated on a form were six soldiers and an officer, armed with swords and pistols, the latter having in addition a long and formidable looking whip. This man appeared to act in the capacity of judge, and I think the summary way in which he disposed of two or three cases of assault, might be with advantage copied by other countries. My guide made his complaint and the wretched driver trembling like a leaf sank on his knees, and placing his hands in an attitude of supplication began jabbering away in Arabic at a tremendous rate, until a sharp cut with the whip brought the gentleman up rather short. After receiving a caution and sundry kicks in that part of the body which is largely developed in the Hotentot, he was told to apologize. This was done by his seizing the guide by his hair and kissing his head. This ended the affair.

We dined at the *table d'hôte*, and were much pleased with the admirable manner in which the table was laid out. The dishes were numerous, French, Egyptian and many others which, although then new to me, are familiar enough now. The French waiters were very attentive, and the brisk manner in which they moved about formed a striking contrast to the slow, solemn, and measured step of the Egyptian servants. A string band played a choice selection of music during dinner. Later in the

evening we went to the only Music Hall the place boasts. The place was crowded with people of all nations, the performers were French; after several songs had been sung, and a ballet danced by a young lady remarkable for her long legs and short petticoats, (who when spinning round on her toes looked very much like an animated parachute) we had a farce; but as all the conversation was in French, I could only catch a word here and there, and was unable to find out the plot; I can't say I admired it very much. On the following day we strolled about the town and made purchases of such articles as would be useful on the journey. We saw a great many carriages belonging chiefly to the European part of the population. The Egyptian swells when driving out, have two men dressed in flowing white garments who run before the carriage and shout the name and rank of their master as they go on. Donkeys are as common here as cabs in London, and appear to be commonly used for the purposes of locomotion. The instant we left the shelter of our hotel we were surrounded by scores of donkey boys, each of whom extolled, in the best English at command, the superior qualities of his animal, shouting, *good donkey sar dis. Dis dam fine donkey sar. Dat kickee donkey sar, dis no kickee donkey sar, &c., &c., &c.* Ladies often ride on donkeys and it is not the least funny sight in Alexandria to see a lady completely covered with the exception of her eyes seated astride on a donkey, and the donkey-boy running behind, urging on

his 'wild career' with a huge stick. When they want to stop, a sudden jerk of the tail brings the animal to a standstill with an abruptness that sends the uninitiated clean over his head.

CHAPTER V.

THE Marseilles steamer having arrived, we were told to be at the Railway Station at 7 P.M., as the journey of 289 miles through the desert was to be made during the night on account of the fearful heat that prevailed during the day. At the appointed time we assembled at the Railway Station, and after a short delay got comfortably settled in the roomy carriages, and were soon rushing through fields of corn, vegetables, fruit, &c., at the rate of 35 or 40 miles an hour. What a violation it is of the laws of poetry and association to introduce a Railroad into Egypt! Is all poetry and all romance to be driven from the world by steam? What grief and vexation it will be to future travellers to find Alexandria and Grand Cairo transformed into a miniature London or Paris, to find Aladdin's lamp superseded by corporation gas, and the dromedary run down by the snorting locomotive express from Calcutta, with Her Majesty's Mails!!

The country is perfectly flat and uninteresting as far as scenery goes, but I think it would be difficult to find a country more fertile than this part of Egypt. Fields of wheat, clover, cotton, tobacco, indigo and poppy overspread the vast area, divided only by the little artificial canals for irrigation or by the natural growth of the crops. A hedge or a wall is never seen. At intervals of several miles groves of palm-trees indicate the presence of a village

long before its low range of huts can be distinguished, for the palm-tree is cultivated only in the neighbourhood of villages where its fruit can be protected and its shade enjoyed.

A run of about 30 miles brought us to a small station when a most striking scene awaited us. On the platform were half a dozen Arabs holding small furnaces fixed on the ends of tall bamboos. These were filled with wood which was burning briskly, hissing, crackling and emitting showers of sparks in every direction. The effect was most weird and romantic, the brown skins and dark flashing eyes of the Arabs being lit up by the fires burning over their heads, the roaring of the engines and the guttural ejaculations of the natives all combined to make a scene so strange and impressive that it is still fresh in my memory.

About two hours later we stopped at another station, the name of which I was unable to ascertain, where coffee was provided. We waited here about half an hour, and shortly afterwards crossed the Nile, which is spanned by a long iron bridge. The river was very low, the water covering only a third of the bed, the remainder being perfectly dry. About 100 miles further on we crossed the river a second and a third time, after which we entered the desert. All around as far as the eye could reach nothing could be seen but sand, not a tree, a shrub or a blade of grass anywhere to relieve the fearful waste. The rapid passage of the train threw the sand up in

clouds, and as it penetrated every crevice of the carriage, into our eyes, mouth and ears, this part of our journey was excessively trying.

At long intervals, a small station was reached, where refreshment, which we all so much needed, was obtained. The fate of the poor fellows who live in these stations must be fearful. The house is built on the sand, and, with the exception of a shed, it is alone, so the poor man who inhabits it must have every necessary of life, water included, brought by the train. He must be without companionship of any kind, and from morning to night his eyes can rest on nothing but that fearful arid waste.

After a run of 50 or 60 miles further on, the appearance of the desert changed, huge hills of bright yellow sand appeared on the horizon, and small shrubs grew at intervals about the plain. The last station we halted at before reaching Suez, consisted like the previous ones, of one or two houses, but the wall of the room in which refreshment was laid, were covered with stuffed snakes, lizards, frog and reptiles of every description. The Station Master, in order to relieve the monotony of his every day life, appears to amuse himself by killing and preparing every thing he can catch that is capable of being stuffed and preserved. We frequently passed groups of Arabs walking over the sand, but saw no other living creature.

A few miles before reaching Suez, the line runs parallel with a small canal about 8 or 10 feet wide, a boat ladder

with merchandise was being towed along it by men, the tow-rope being attached to a band passed round their heads.

We reached Suez at 7 A.M. thoroughly tired and worn out, but as our stay extended over a few hours only, I hurried over my breakfast, and started off to see the town. The Arabs, by whom the town is populated, are hundreds of years behind the Egyptians in civilization; the native portion of the town consists of mud huts and wretched hovels, the streets so narrow that three men cannot walk through them abreast. But the stench, the unutterable filth and the disgusting sights that I met at every turn were fearful to a degree. A brisk trade was going on in the Bazar where goods of every description were being bought and sold. The only European buildings I saw, were the Peninsular and Oriental Hotel, the British Consulate, the Post Office and the Office of the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

At 10 a small steamer was ready to take us out in the offing, where the two large steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company were moored, one bound to Bombay, the other to Calcutta. The Indian Mails were put on board the Bombay Steamer, and those for Southern India, Australia, China and Japan on the Calcutta Steamer. All the passengers bound for Bombay left us here, so we lost many pleasant companions. On getting on board the "China," our new steamer, we found her crowded with boxes and luggage, and every thing appeared to be in the

greatest confusion. She is much larger than the "*Tanjore*," but the accommodation was much inferior. The ship looked dirty, and contrasted most unfavorably with the beautifully clean condition in which we found every thing on the other side of Egypt. This is, however, to a certain extent unavoidable, for the steamer is manned by Asiatics. Lascars, Malays, Chinese and Negroes compose the crew. The boatswain, carpenter and butcher being, with the exception of the officers, the only Englishmen on board. The crew numbered in all about one hundred men. The men are very active and run up and down the rigging like monkeys, their toes being almost as useful to them as their fingers. They live entirely on curry and rice, eat no meat, and like all Asiatics ignore the use of either knife, fork or spoon—a large tray is placed on the deck in which is a huge quantity of curry and rice, round which the fellows seat themselves when at meals.

With their hands they mix the food, then taking a large handful of the mixture, they squeeze it into a ball and thrust it into their mouths where it rapidly disappears to be followed by another handful equally large. After clearing the dish, they finish their repast by drinking water out of a *lotah*, a brass vessel with which each man provides himself, which answers for washing, drink, &c. The Somalis, or as they are called on board, "Seedo boys," are very much like the Negroes in build and cast of features; they are employed in the engine-rooms, the heat being too great for Europeans.

The work on board is thus apportioned : the Negroes work below in the engine-room and stokehole ; the Lascars (Indians) attend to the sails and to the general working of the ship ; the Chinese and Maltese steer, and man the Captain's boat.

We embarked about 9 A.M., but remained at our moorings until 4-30 P. M. The heat during the day was fearful, a strong breeze was blowing, but coming across the hot sandy desert, it was as scorching as a blast from a furnace, and although we assumed our lightest clothing, we were literally streaming with perspiration. We sailed at 5 P. M., but still the scorching heat halfroasted us ; during the night it became somewhat cooler ; but in the cabins where the air was still, it was terrific. No one could sleep, and nearly the whole of the passengers had their mattresses placed on the main deck, where every available space was occupied almost immediately after the sun went down, for there is no twilight here. All etiquette, and indeed the ordinary notions of propriety, were thrown aside, and ladies and gentlemen, married or single, spinsters or bachelors, slept side by side totally regardless of who was next them. At 5 in the morning the stewards roused us up, and there was a most amusing scene ; ladies hurrying off to their cabins, and gentlemen packing up their mattresses and carrying them to their respective quarters, in every description of undress. This continued all through our passage down the Red Sea, and strange as such proceedings would be considered in England

or in any other civilized country, there was no help for it here, for, I believe, it was simply a matter of life and death. The day after leaving Suez, we passed the spot where the waters divided and the sea became dry land, and where the children of Israel passed over from Egypt. The spot was eagerly looked out for by all on board, and although we were sufficiently close to see it distinctly, there was nothing unusual in its appearance,—no monument or memorial of any kind that would serve to indicate a spot of such sacred associations.

Nothing unusual occurred during our five days' passage down the Red Sea, the heat continued the same and we were nearly all knocked up. Six stewards were ill, the baker, the butcher, six first-class passengers, and a great many second. The doctor, therefore, had quite as much on his hands as he could well attend to, and the ship was almost converted into a hospital.

The morning of the day on which we passed the Straits of Babel-Mandeb, called by the sailors "The Gates of Hell," a passenger (Mr. McLeod) proceeding to Shanghai, died of heat apoplexy. He was found in his cabin insensible with his head out of the window. The poor fellow evidently felt the attack coming on, and put his head out with a view of getting a little air. They brought him down into the gangway, and the doctors did all that could be done to save him but he never regained consciousness and died in fifteen minutes after he was discovered. The body was sewn up in canvas with heavy

pieces of iron, and buried in the evening at sunset. This melancholy incident created a most painful impression on board, and cast a gloom over the whole ship. The funeral service was most impressively read by the Captain. The corpse was laid on the grating and covered with the Union Jack, and at the words "we therefore commit his body to the deep," the end of the grating was lifted up, and the corpse slipped into the sea with a loud splash. Just as this occurred we were passing the Island of Perim, which was taken possession of by the British in 1860. It is a small spot, and its only advantage to the British Government consists in its forming the key to the Red Sea. A fort has been erected on it, and a detachment of soldiers are kept there; but a more desolate place for any one to be stationed in is scarcely possible.

Nothing further occurred worth noting until the following night, when we arrived at Aden. It was quite dark when the steamer anchored, and most of the passengers were asleep. Immediately the ship was made fast, the sailors commenced taking coals on board and continued doing so all the night. In the morning, all the passengers who had slept on deck were as black as the Asiatics, the fine dust from the coals having penetrated every crevice of the ship. It was an awful mess; do what we could, the dust seemed to stick to us; our clothes, towels, bedding and every thing, in fact, not looked up was literally covered. I had arranged with a fellow-passenger to have a swim here, as the water was beautifully

calm, but when I began to prepare myself he backed out of it. However I had made up my mind, and in I jumped off the deck of the steamer. It was a good height, and during the few moments that elapsed after jumping off before touching the water, it occurred to me that I had been rather foolhardy, and thoughts of sharks and other horrible things rushed through my brain. However, I forgot all these when I found myself under the water and rose again to the surface. It was exceedingly buoyant and deliciously warm, I swam down to the stern of the steamer and back again, and was amusing myself by floating, when two little Arab boys, who were paddling about in the veriest cockle-shell of a boat I ever saw, shouted out, "*Sharkee fish, Sahib, sharkee fish.*"

The fright I was in was a caution, my heart almost stopped beating, and I really thought my journey in the Tanjore had come to a sudden and unexpected termination. Thoughts of home, friends, and of thousands of things that I had forgotten, rushed through my mind with incredible speed, and I bitterly regretted my folly in bathing in such a treacherous place. Of course it takes time to write this, but it all passed through my mind in a brief moment. I immediately struck out for the little boat as fast as I could, and the young niggers instead of coming to my assistance paddled off in an opposite direction as fast as they could, shouting like devils.

The noise attracted the attention of some of the officers on board, one of them assured me that there were

no sharks in the harbour. I then relinquished my chase and swam back to the steamer tolerably well exhausted. But my troubles were not yet over. I had dived off the left-hand side of the ship to avoid observation, and the ladder being on the opposite side, I had arranged to be hauled up with a rope passed through a block. When I swam up to the steamer, the rope was lowered and I laid hold of it with a firm grasp, and the sailors commenced hauling away, but the lazy fellows pulled so slowly that it was with the greatest difficulty I could hold on, and I was on the point of letting go the rope and dropping down into the sea again when some of the passengers "lent a hand" and hauled me in. I was thoroughly exhausted, the swim after the boat having completely pumped me before the hauling-up process commenced. However, I enjoyed the bath very much, and had a good laugh at my fellow-passenger who backed out of his promise.

After breakfast we went on shore, but the little we saw barely compensated us either for the discomfort we experienced in landing, or for the expense thereof, for of all the dismal, barren, God-forsaken places it has ever been my lot to see Aden certainly bears the palm. The view of the place from the harbour at all bad—bold, rugged rocks and cliffs rise in almost every direction, and the forts and batteries scattered about give to the place an appearance striking and imposing. It is on landing however that the horrors and desolation become

apparent. Not a tree, a flower, a shrub, or even a blade of grass grew anywhere, all was barren, rocky, and desolate, the frightful intensity of the heat assisting to make the place as disagreeable in every way as the most imaginative mind could possibly conceive. There is one row of houses occupied by Parsees, who keep a kind of *omnium gatherum* store. Here we had some hot lemonade for which we paid an exorbitant sum, and read the Indian Newspapers.

There is a small dispensary here (similar to those found in every station in India) in charge of an Apothecary. This individual informed me that the Government sent the medicines from Bombay, and that they were given away to any one who wanted any. It occurred to me that I might as well replenish my stock of medicines, &c., here instead of purchasing of the Parsee. I, therefore, said, 'Then I'll take two pots of Liebig's Extract of meat, a bottle of Seidlitz Powder, and a box of Cockle's Pills. These articles, however, I found were not included in the list of medicines kept here, being considered by the Government luxuries rather than medicines. However, I came away with a big roll of Chiretta, and a bottle of some Iron-tonic.

CHAPTER VI.

WE left Aden at 12 noon, and heartily glad we were to get out to sea again, for the heat and glare were awful. The pitch between the timbers on the floors of the cabin actually-melted and oozed out, sticking to boots, port-manteaus, and to every thing placed on it. We saw a great number of flying fish during our passage down the Red Sea, and almost as far down as Galle. It was difficult to believe at first that these little fish were not birds. They sprang out of the water and flew along very much like a swallow, just skimming the crests of the waves. A great many dropped on board. They have two long fins which extend the whole length of the back, these act as wings, but as the fish can only fly when the fins or wings are wet, they are unable to fly a long distance without dropping into the sea at frequent intervals. They are mostly small, about the size of a small herring.

The Sea was tolerably smooth for some time after leaving Aden, but we were told to expect rough weather, as the S. W. Monsoon had just set in. The following evening we sailed almost close to Socotra, an island situated near the entrance to the Red Sea, and after passing it emerged fairly into the Indian Ocean, where the full force of the Monsoon caught us. The water was very rough, great waves following one another and striking the quarter of the steamer with a thundering report, sending the spray in clouds all over the deck.

The steamer pitched and rolled most violently, and we began to get very squeamish. After sunset the wind moderated, and matrasses were hauled on deck as usual, but about midnight a violent squall came on, the Sea suddenly became one mass of hissing foam, and before any one could pack up his bedding, a mass of water rushed over the bows of the steamer, drenching all of us to the skin. This was naturally followed by roars of laughter from the younger ones, and by curses both deep and loud from crusty old fogies who failed to see any fun in it. However, we soon huddled away into our respective cabins, but sleep was out of the question. Boxes, portmanteaus, boots, and, in fact, every thing that was not fastened securely to the ship, rolled and danced and kicked about the floor of the cabin in a most improper manner.

The rain fell in torrents, and every thing appeared as dull and miserable as one can possibly conceive, for three days and nights, during which time most of the passengers, myself included, became very sick and very miserable. On the fourth day the weather brightened and the passengers did likewise. The run from Aden occupied about 9 days, and was the longest time we were out of sight of land during the voyage. The weather continued wet and squally until Galle was reached. Just before sighting the land, an immense shark, quite 20 feet in length, was seen alongside the steamer. This caused a

the side to get a peep at the monster, who kept company with us for some time. About two hours after this, we came in sight of land, and steered straight for the harbor. A more lovely little place than Galle scarcely exists, I should say, and to us, whose eyes had seen no vegetation of any kind since leaving Egypt, it seemed a perfect paradise. All around the coast in every direction are huge forests of Cocoanut trees, which grow down to the very edge of the sea, and extend back inland as far as the eye can reach; their tall, straight, branchless trunks being surmounted with large clusters of huge leaves of the most lovely green color imaginable. The steamer "hove too" about a mile from the harbor and signalled for the pilot, who was soon seen coming towards us in the most extraordinary-looking boat I have ever seen. The swell of the ocean was very great, and during the time we were "hove too," the steamer rocked so much that we were obliged to hold on like grim death in order to keep on our feet.

The boat in which the pilot was coming out to us soon came alongside, when both it and the native boatmen who propelled it became objects of considerable observation.

It is almost impossible to give an idea of the peculiar boat without the aid of an illustration which cannot be given here. However, it consists essentially of a long narrow boat, about 20 feet long by $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 feet wide, with a round bottom. Attached to this boat, and at

right angles with it, are two stout poles about six or eight feet long, to the end of which is securely fastened at right angles, and consequently parallel with the boat, a stout pole of jackwood. This floats in the water and keeps the boat from capsizing, which it could not help doing were it to become detached from this out-rigger.

The boatmen were dressed in the most simple manner possible—a yard of wide tape would have made a complete suit for the whole lot. A costume of this description has many advantages in a hot climate.

Some hours after coming to an anchor, we went on shore. The road leading to the town is beautifully shaded by huge trees, whose branches mingling overhead effectually keep off the scorching heat of the sun, and make a cool and delightful shade. Our first visit was paid to the Oriental Hotel, a very large and spacious building, overlooking the town and harbor. A wide verandah extends along the front of the hotel, in which are placed numerous small tables and peculiarly comfortable chairs to be found only in India. Here we indulged in various concoctions, and lounged about for an hour or so, when we started off to look round the town. It is not a very large place and the houses are all small, consisting chiefly of one story only.

The streets, however, were clean and neat, and there was something strange and uncommon in the general appearance of the town that impressed me very much. The chief business done by the natives appears to be

making tortoise-shell chains, combs, and ornaments, and gold and silver jewellery. Unset stones, diamonds, rubies, emeralds and gems of every description can be brought here; very often they are genuine and valuable, but equally often they are Brummagem stones only.

It is astonishing how easily the English people who land here for the first time get taken in. It never occurs to them that Brummagem paste could be found in the land where diamonds and rubies and other precious stones are supposed to be so plentiful and so cheap, nor can they believe that the picturesque looking Cingallee, who chatters so glibly, and puts on such an injured expression if you suggest that he is asking a somewhat high price for his wares, can be any thing but a simple child of nature. They, however, generally find to their cost that he is too often an adept in the art of swindling. Many of the passengers paid a visit to the Cinnamon gardens, some miles away, but as the rain fell in torrents at frequent intervals, I declined to go.

We remained here three days, waiting for the other steamers to come in, in order to exchange mails, passengers, &c., &c.

The steamers from Australia, Bombay, Calcutta, China, and Suez all meet here for this purpose and as soon as they have made the necessary exchanges proceed on their respective voyages.

The steamer from China proceeds to Bombay. The steamer from Bombay proceeding to China and Japan.

The steamer from Calcutta proceeds to Suez and *vice versa* : while the steamer from Australia to Galle returns on the following day.

We left here at 4 P. M. on Wednesday evening, and the weather being bright and the wind in our favor, we slipped rapidly through the water which was as smooth as a mill pond. Early on the following morning, however, the wind freshened until we were opposite the Straits of Palk, which divides the Island of Ceylon from the Continent of India. Here the wind increased to a stiff gale, the sea rose to a terrific height, constantly breaking over the ship, so that no one could venture on deck without being encased in waterproof. The boats were secured by extra lashing, and the anchors and every thing movable about the steamer was also made secure.

All these preparations indicated the approach of rough weather, and for 36 hours it was indeed rough, and I can't say I enjoyed it at all. After we got to the lee of the land again, the sea became comparatively smooth, and continued so until the evening of the second day after leaving Galle, when we sighted the lighthouse off Madras.

At about 4 miles from shore we anchored. Two rockets were then sent up and a gun fired, which was answered by similar signals from shore. At 5 on the following morning, we steamed about 2 miles further in shore, and took up our position opposite the town of Madras. We were immediately surrounded by scores of Canoes, Catamarans,

and boats of every description, all swarming with natives, the majority of whom came on board. All kinds of goods were offered for sale—ladies' dresses wonderfully embroidered, puzzles of the most ingenious description, combs, boots and shoes, trinkets of all kinds, and a thousand different things, more or less strange, the names of which I cannot now remember: chains and bracelets made of a peculiar kind of grass, that at first sight looked like gold, buffalo-horns mounted and unmounted, cigars of various kinds, pineapples, mangoes, plantains and other fruit.

The surf being exceedingly heavy, and there being no pier to land on, I was advised not to go on shore. The passengers land in huge boats, called Masoolah boats, about 20 feet long and 6 or 7 feet deep, and very high out of the water. They are made of some light wood, and the planks are stitched together with hide. This secures a certain amount of elasticity, which enables them to withstand the violence of the surf, as it dashes them against the shore which would infallibly stave in the timbers of a more rigidly constructed craft. They are however any thing but sea-worthy, in the ordinary sense of the word, although they answer the purpose for which they are used, and are so leaky that every boat carries a boy who is provided with a large leather-bag with which he constantly bales out the water as fast as he is able. The boatmen who propel these surf boats are usually twelve in number, and the costume they

wear is, if possible, more scanty than that affected by the coolies and boatmen at Galle; these fellows were allowed to come on deck, where they strutted about in the presence of the ladies as unconcernedly as if every inch of their dusky skins were invisible. I think the officers of the ship should prevent natives coming on board as they do in a state of almost perfect nudity. It is an outrage to common decency which could easily be prevented were proper measures adopted. The surf-boats are, I was informed, a comparatively modern invention; formerly passengers landed on *Catamarans*: these consist of three long baulks of timber lashed together, without the least pretention to any thing resembling a boat. On this raft squat two natives, one at either end provided with pieces of wood which being used as oars send the raft along. When even a faint ripple plays on the water, this wretched affair gets wetted from end to end. This, however, is quite immaterial to the natives on the catamaran, as they are dressed in the convenient though somewhat primitive style alluded to above. They wear a curious conical cap in which they carry letters and papers, and in very rough weather are the only means of communication between vessels and the shore, when no boat of more civilised construction could ride through the fearful surf.

Landing can now generally be accomplished with no more discomfort than that occasioned by being soaked to the skin with salt water, but here on earth Europeans ever

managed to land on a Catamaran puzzles me to this day ! There is a large pier but unfortunately it is getting knocked about by every stray cyclone, and has been almost always under repairs since it was constructed.

During the morning some native jugglers came on board. The tricks performed by these men excelled anything I had ever seen before. They were all neatly done, and as the men had none of those imposing-looking apparatus that European jugglers almost invariably employ, and were perfectly free from clothing from the waist upwards, the tricks appeared all the more wonderful from the primitive materials with which they were performed.

They first commenced with top-spinning. A top was wound up, thrown straight out from the hand and dexterously caught on the tip of the finger (without touching the deck); from here it was transferred to the top of a small stick which was balanced on the tip of the man's nose. It then span (stick and top) on the old fellow's nose with marvellous rapidity. Several modifications of this were performed with equal success. The next trick was somewhat similar to the old-fashioned English "Thimble-rig," but instead of three thimbles and a pea, the Madrassee had three brass cups and a big marble. The difficulty of concealing the marble, therefore, was much greater than the pea. The trick was most cleverly done, the marble always turning up under unsuspected covers. A young lady passenger going out

to a convent near Calcutta was quite frightened at this ; and asked me seriously if the juggler were not in league with the devil ? After several other astonishing tricks had been performed, the juggler took a large stone, as big as a lady's fist, and stretching his naturally capacious mouth to its widest dimensions, he, after sundry attempts, succeeded in putting this immense stone into it. After trying very hard for some time he swallowed it, or at all events appeared to do so, for we could distinctly see a huge lump going down his throat. He appeared to relish this part of the performance very much, for he smacked his lips and rubbed his wrinkled old stomach in the most vigorous manner. He then opened his mouth to convince us that the stone was not there ; after which he gave his stomach a big thump, followed up by one on the back of his head and by numerous grimaces of the most horrible description, he managed to get the stone up into his mouth again, from whence by the assistance of a piece of stout bamboo used as a lever, he jerked it on the deck. After this performance he produced a small flat basket in which lay a *cobra de capella*, the deadliest snake in India. It was of a drab color and about 4 feet long and was lying coiled up in the basket apparently asleep. The juggler then took a rude instrument made of a pipe and two hollowed gourds, and played a few notes, upon which the cobra slowly lifted its head and gradually raised itself. The man then touched it with a

noise, and sprang at the man's hand ; its forked tongue darting in and out with the greatest rapidity.

The snake was warded off, however, by the stick and put back in its basket. The next trick was the most marvellous I have ever seen, and it was certainly performed in the most wonderful manner ; the trick is peculiar to Indian jugglers, and they perform it so cleverly that it is impossible, no matter how closely one watches them, to discover how it is done.

In this instance, the juggler was seated on the deck surrounded by the people looking on, any of whom could have touched him by simply stretching forth the hand, so the chances of our discovering the *modus operandi* were so far favorable. The only appliances used were a handful of sand, a small cloth, and a cocoanut shell filled with water.

The juggler first spread the cloth on the deck, and in the centre of it put the sand. He then produced and handed round for our inspection a mango stone. (The mango is a fruit as large as a pear but much more delicious, and has like the plum a hard stone or seed.) This seed was then buried in the handful of sand ; a few drops of water from the cocoanut-shell were sprinkled over it, and the whole covered with the four corners of the cloth. He then made a few passes with a small stick, blew a few notes on his gourd flageolet. After an interval of, say, two minutes, the four corners of the cloth were turned back and the mango seed had shot out two

beautiful green leaves attached to a small living stem. The sand was removed and the seed passed around for our inspection, in order that we might convince ourselves that the plant was actually growing from the seed, which it most undoubtedly was.

It was then again placed in the sand, again watered, covered over with the cloth, passed over and played over as before. The cloth was again removed and behold the plant had again grown several inches, had put forth several new leaves and was quite as large as a full grown lettuce. The leaves were then plucked off and handed to those standing near. Had the man more room he would doubtless have gone on with the trick, and as they often do, produced a mango tree with fruit growing from it; but considering that the juggler had nothing to assist him but a cloth about a foot square, a handful of sand, a little water and a mango stone, and bearing in mind the fact of our being close to him, the performance was certainly; the most remarkable I have ever seen.

The town of Madras is built on the coast. It appears to be of considerable length, but we were too far off to see much of it.

CHAPTER VII.

• We left Madras roads at 12 precisely, and after 3 days' of very dismal weather, neared the mouth of the River Hooghly. The difference in the color of the water indicated that we were approaching the river, for it gradually changed from a beautiful greenish tint to that of an intensely muddy color.

A sharp look out was made for the pilot brig, as we had expected to fall in with her on Monday evening. The navigation of the River Hooghly is extremely difficult, the bed of the river being full of shoals and sand-banks. The entrance is also very difficult to make, particularly in thick, or as the sailors call it, dirty weather. The pilots consequently are sent out in brigs which sail about in the track of vessels making for the port.

About midnight, he came on board to the great relief, doubtless, of the men on the masts who had been watching for the lights of the pilot-vessel all night. At 9 on the following morning, the weather became so thick and hazy that we were obliged to put about and steer out to sea again. This we did not at first understand and many became alarmed. However, there was no cause for it apparently, the pilot only wanted more time to let the water rise, so that a difficult shoal could be passed safely. This was eventually accomplished and we anchored

in the evening in the River Hooghly just opposite Saugor Island.

The river at this part is so wide that its flat, muddy banks are scarcely visible to the eye of a landsman. Saugor Island, opposite which we anchored, is said to be literally swarming with tigers, alligators and other unpleasant animals. A very fine lighthouse stands on it, without which it would be almost impossible for vessels to enter the mouth of this dangerous river in safety. The night was beautifully calm and the moon shone with a splendour and brilliancy rarely, if ever, seen except in the tropics. Several fire-flies found their way on board from the neighbouring island, and as most of us had never seen them before, we were much struck with the exceedingly brilliant light they emit when flying. They are to be found in thousands, about the trees and bushes in the Suburbs of Calcutta, and I hardly know a prettier sight than a tree on a dark night literally swarming with fire-flies. This is commonly seen in Calcutta, and the suburbs during the "Rainy Season." They give a light much like the glowworm in England, but larger and more brilliant, but—instead of being comparatively few in number, as glowworms are, they are to be found here in millions. This night being our last on board, we decided to have a concert on deck; and as many of the Ladies and Gentlemen could sing very nicely; songs, glees, trios, recitations, solos on the guitar, &c., &c., were the order of the night until a very late hour. I think most of

us regretted our journey had ended, for although we had many discomforts on board, the frequent bad weather soured our tempers, interfering with our appetites and making us peevish and irritable, to say nothing of many disagreeable people with whom we were necessarily compelled to come daily in contact ; still I am sure not one of the little circle with whom I chiefly associated would have hesitated, had it been possible, to prolong the voyage, I may almost say, *ad infinitum*. There were many things to account for this, which any one who has made the voyage from London to Calcutta, will readily understand. In the first place we were all young, and with the exception of the ladies, had the same object in view in coming out to India. We were every hour of the day compelled to be in one another's society, and, as our circle included several interesting young ladies, it is only a natural sequence that a very liberal amount of flirtation was carried on during the voyage. I am not by any means an advocate of flirtation as a rule, but there are exceptions in every case, and I am bound to admit, that I know of no more pleasant or more effectual way of breaking the dull monotony of a long sea voyage than indulging in a little harmless flirtation. Lord Macaulay, in one of his wonderful essays, bears evidence on this point. He says :—" No place is so propitious for the formation of close friendship as on board a passenger ship. There are few people who do not consider a voyage of many weeks insupportably dull. Any thing is welcome

which may break that long monotony; a sail, a shark, an albatross—a man overboard. Many people find some resource in eating twice as many meals as on land. But the great devices for killing time are flirting and quarrelling. The facilities for both these exciting pursuits are great. The inmates of the ship are thrown together far more than in any country seat or boarding house. None can escape from the rest except by imprisoning himself in a species of cell in which he can hardly turn. All food, all exercise is taken in company. Ceremony and etiquette is to a certain extent banished. It is every day in the power of a mischievous person to inflict innumerable annoyances. It is every day in the power of an amiable person to confer little services." Such was certainly the case on board our steamer (as it doubtless is in all other passenger steamers) and it sufficiently accounts for the general feeling of regret that most of us shared.

On the following morning at daybreak, we weighed anchor and steamed up the river full power, and the tide being in our favor we made at least sixteen knots an hour. The Custom House officers being shortly expected on board, every one was busily employed in carefully packing up trunks, and getting them brought on deck for the inspection of these individuals. The banks of the river are only a few feet above the level of the water, and the country all around is perfectly flat; nothing to be seen but native huts, fields of rice, tall cocoanut

and palm trees, and miles of dense jungle. The river, as I have already stated, is a most difficult one to navigate, and were it not constantly surveyed and the safe channels marked out by buoys, steamers of any size could never come up in safety. At times we sailed so close to the banks of the river that we almost brushed against the dense foliage that overhung the water.

At 10 we slackened speed and the preventive officers came on board and immediately began overhauling our luggage. They were particularly anxious to see the "second watch" which they supposed we had about us—no passenger being allowed more than one, free of duty. My gun was taken away marked C. H. (custom house) but the rest of my luggage was passed without difficulty. A few hours later we passed a few English houses, numerous native huts and an extensive, many-storied Cotton Mill which appeared strikingly out of character with its surroundings. At 1 P. M. we came in sight of Garden Reach with Calcutta in the distance. On our right we passed the magnificent palace of the Ex-King of Oude in which he has resided ever since the annexation of Oude by the British Government. The grounds of the palace are of very great extent and are surrounded by a wall. The interior is kept in the most exquisite order, and contains a very large menagerie and almost every thing that can be procured for money. A few minutes later we came alongside the P. & O. Company's wharf, to which the steamer was quickly moored.

We were immediately surrounded by scores of *dhingees* (native boats) and boarded by hundreds of coolies looking out for baggage to take on shore. All was now bustle and confusion. Adieus were rapidly exchanged, ladies kissing and hugging one another in a most tantalising manner, and men shaking hands, swearing eternal friendship and wishing each other God speed. It was quite a study to watch the different expressions on the faces of the passengers. Some were glad that the journey had ended, others, chiefly ladies, were sad and tearful, while many, particularly those who had come out on speculation, looked anxious and spiritless. After hunting up my male friends, and indulging in handshakings so numerous and so hearty as to render that important member comparatively useless for the rest of the day, I searched out my friends of the gentler sex in various quiet nooks and corners of the ship with which I had become rather familiar. Two for whom I had a very strong friendship, and to whom I used to read spoony bits from Tom Moore, Byron, &c., &c., were sent out for the purpose of becoming nuns in an Irish convent, not a thousand miles from Calcutta. The poor girls had never left their native village in Ireland before they started for India, which they doubtless did without the least compunction. Their stay in London and in Paris on their way out, however, had given them wider views, and by the time the steamer reached Calcutta, they both wished themselves back again in their native land. They

eventually reached the convent in safety, and are, I believe, happy and contented in their new home. After bidding them farewell I returned to the deck, and in company with the gentleman who had come to meet me, left the steamer. We got into a *ticca-gharrie* (an Indian cab) and, after a drive of a mile or so, came in sight of one of the best views it is possible to get of Calcutta. A stranger visiting Calcutta for the first time, cannot fail to be struck, with the imposing view that suddenly bursts upon his sight as he passes the huge citadel of Fort William and finds himself immediately facing the long line of palatial residences called Chowringhee.

On the south side of Calcutta is an immense *maidan*, or plain, covered with grass as green as can be found in any meadow in England. This *maidan* is intersected by ornamental roads and footpaths, and is one of the great features of the city. It is nearly five miles in circumference; and being as flat as a table, forms one of the best places for taking horse exercise that can be found in any part of the world.

On the east side of this plain with the houses facing it, is built Chowringhee—a long line of magnificent palaces as they may well be called. They are chiefly two or three storeys high, the distance from floor to ceiling being usually from 15 to 20 feet. Each house is provided with a spacious verandah, which often extends all around the house, supported by massive circular pillars. These are so constructed that they keep off

the sun from the rooms behind during the day, and form pleasant places to sit or lounge in during the cool of the morning and evening. On the north side of the maidan at right angles with Chowringhee is built the Esplanade, a long range of business houses and public buildings of palatial dimensions. In the centre is situated Government House—the Official residence of the Viceroy, while to the left are the Town Hall and the recently completed and superb block of buildings forming the High Court of Bengal.

In the distance can be seen the dome of the new Post Office, the tapering spires of numerous European Churches, and on the right the gilded and picturesque minarets of the Mahomedan Mosque.

After I had been introduced to my new acquaintances, I was taken to a boarding house where apartments had been provided for me. I was then informed that the first thing to be done was to get a *khedmutgar* who would look after my clothes, clean my boots, &c., and stand behind my chair at meals. For this luxury, which is indispensable in India, I was to pay a salary of Rs. 8 per month. A few hours later a sable individual was engaged, but as he didn't know a single word of English, I experienced some difficulty in making him understand what I wanted. The first thing he managed to make me understand was that he wanted some money to buy shoe-brushes. I gave the fellow 2 or 3 Rupees for that purpose, and he never turned up again. This was not

encouraging; another man was then engaged who eventually turned out a good servant and remained in my employ nearly two years.

My diary has now come to an end. When I promised my friends in England to jot down a few notes of my journey and to send them a short description of the different countries we saw, of the cities we visited, and of the manners and customs of the people who inhabited them, I had not the remotest idea that it would prove to be so formidable an undertaking. To write out a separate copy for each of my friends to whom I promised my diary was a task, seeing the length to which it had grown, that I certainly shrank from, and it is more than probable my promise would never have been fulfilled had not the idea of printing a few copies occurred to me. It was some time before I could summon sufficient courage to put this crude production in the hands of the Printer, fearing that it might accidentally fall into the hands of some, who, being unaware of the circumstances that induced me to print it, might ridicule both the diary and its author. I trust this will not happen. It is simply a narrative of the journey; a record of facts strung together as well as my limited acquaintance with my native tongue will permit, without pretensions of any kind, and possessing little or no interest, except to those relations and friends in England for whom it is written.